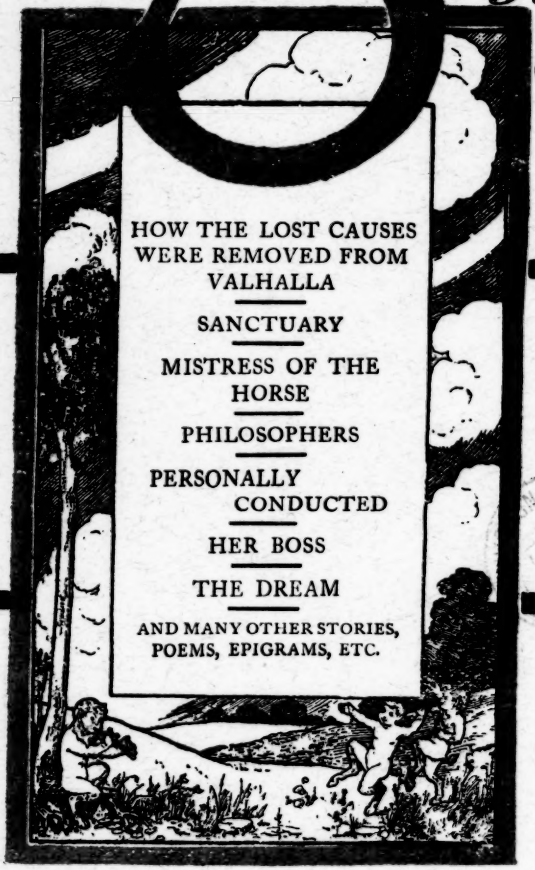
THE SMART SET

A Magazine of Cleverness

To Amuse, Not to Instruct



HOW THE LOST CAUSES WERE REMOVED FROM VALHALLA

SANCTUARY

MISTRESS OF THE HORSE

PHILOSOPHERS

PERSONALLY CONDUCTED

HER BOSS

THE DREAM

AND MANY OTHER STORIES, POEMS, EPIGRAMS, ETC.

OCTOBER
1919

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THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

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Editor—J. W. MILNE

OCTOBER, 1919

HOW THE LOST CAUSES WERE REMOVED FROM VALHALLA	Lord Dunsany	103
THE REASON	May Holt	104
MISTRESS OF THE HORSE	Richmond Brooks Barrett	105
SANCTUARY	Theodore Dreiser	133
A COLLEGE EDUCATION	T. F. Mitchell	150
RUST	Mary Carolyn Davies	150
THE OPPONENT	L. M. Hussey	151
POLYCHROME AT EVENING	Jean Allen	158
PERSONALLY CONDUCTED	J. L. Morgan	159
SHADOW-HOUR	George O'Neil	165
GARMENTS	Blanche Shoemaker Wagstaff	166
AVAUNT I	June Gibson & John Hamilton	166
PHILOSOPHERS	Morris Colman	167
TOURING HELL	Helen Drake	174
HER BOSS	Willa Sibert Cather	175
THE MISTY LAKE	Charles Wharton Stork	188
THE DREAM	Muna Lee	189
DUSK	David Morton	192
THE CLERK	Rita Wellman	193
ABOUT FASHIONS AND OTHER THINGS	Various Hands	200
MOTORS AND MOTORING	W. Whittall	206

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APHORISTIC LAUGHTER.

By

H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

DEAD HEAT

FOR years I have suffered from the affliction of telling the truth. Convalescence is pleasant.

In some matters men are always babies. This accounts for the belief in the maternal instinct.

It is often said that all men are naturally polygamous. But it is bad form to mention polyandry.

I am not inclined to believe that *every* woman is at heart a—deceiver. She only thinks that every other woman is.

It is not necessary to be a statistician to disagree that men are less virtuous than women. It is a simple matter of mathematics.

Woman is seldom insular in her curiosity. She is catholic in most things.

A man must be very adventurous to tell the truth. To tell the truth a woman must be very plain—thus she has no necessity for falsity, and makes a virtue of necessity.

A charming young person recently told me that she disagreed with all my ideas. But she was careful to leave me no alternatives. Antagonism is intoxicating.

Idealism is a splendid emotion for solitude. To share is to dispel illusion.

Most women expect the earth. Why do they not realise the fortune of an occasional fragment of heaven?

Women are perfect actresses. So it is natural they should love the theatre where they are amused by the unnatural misrepresentations of themselves.

The average musical comedy is an unmusical tragedy of stupidity and cupidity.

Profiteering is now a necessary vice. One must profiteer to pay the other profiteers and meet the Income Tax Collector without a blush.

Old men are either fools or cynics. I have not met many cynics.

If the fatuous old men only knew what the flatteress really thinks of them the churches would be fuller—of old men.

* * * * *

In the Press Club recently some complimentary allusions were made to Pope and Bradley's advertisements, but it was agreed they had no commercial value. This gave me a fine feeling of altruism, but my Chartered Accountants and the Inland Revenue brought me to earth.

My accountants tell me coldly that since I originated this business, and in my spare time wrote occasional commercial philosophies, the result has been—Increase in 1909 on 1903, 500 per cent. Increase in 1919 on 1903, 5,000 per cent. It really does seem quite a lot.

Figures are fascinating. They are the only fascinating things that do not lie.

* * * * *

Having become mathematical in my laughter, I may mention that the charges of this House have not yet reached the heights of giddy Bolshevism. Lounge Suits from £9 9s. Dinner Suits from £12 12s. Overcoats from £10 10s. Riding Breeches from £5 15s. 6d.

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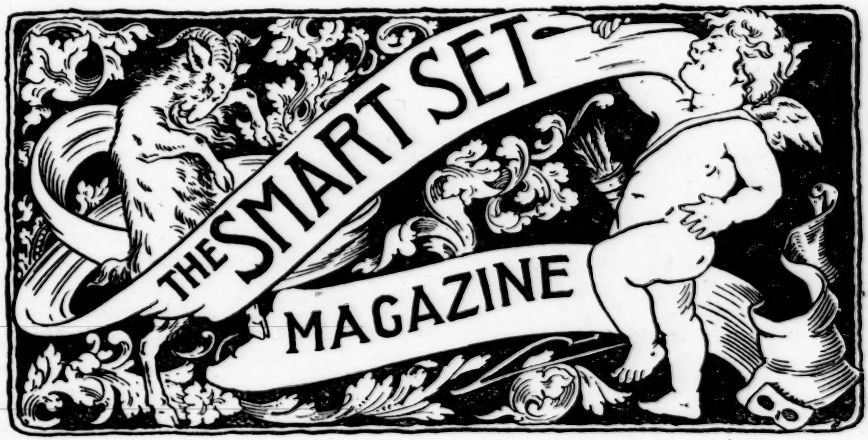

HOW THE LOST CAUSES WERE REMOVED FROM VALHALLA

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By Lord Dunsany

IN the dark, at the dawn of time, before peoples began, the spirits of the nations rose up out of their lands and trooped away to Valhalla to be given each a Cause. And when each one had his Cause then all was ready, and tribes arose in the valleys and peoples began.

The spirits were given their causes by Those that were greater than they, each spirit choosing in turn from all the causes there were. It was thus, long since, in the dark, that the Nations came by their causes. And some of those spirits chose well and some chose ill, and others chose what causes were still to be had when the swifter spirits had chosen and flown away.

All but the spirits of Ireland went thence with a cause that day. In intense greenery of emerald moss and amongst scarlet mosses, in a low land circled by hills all misty morning and evening, with a moist wind blowing across that even then was mournful, dreaming of deeds of gods that were ancient even then, and brooding then as now upon things that cannot be, the Spirit of Ireland sat. And a rumour came to him there such as passes from spirit to spirit, and he knew that the spirits had chosen, and feared Valhalla was bare. And wailing he went in haste, and came the last to Valhalla. Nothing had they to give him, They that were greater than he, but the lost causes that the other spirits had left. In all Valhalla were lost causes only.

"Begob," said the Spirit of Ireland, and his wild eyes twinkled and shone, "by the Holy Mother of God they're after leaving the best."

And eagerly he gathered them all and tenderly carried them thence.

And so there were no lost causes left in Valhalla to trouble the pitiful Gods.

THE REASON

By May Holt

HE swore that I was the first woman he had ever loved.

After he had slipped the platinum-set diamond on my willing finger, I smiled into his dark eyes. He crushed my unprotesting lips in a deep kiss . . .

"You are the first woman I have ever loved," he murmured again.

I hid my smile on his khaki shoulder.

For I had known his sister at boarding school. She was my room-mate. We always talked in the dark, long after bed-time.

So of course I knew all about the flapper of his prep-school days.

And the red-haired actress.

And the blonde manicure girl.

And the dazzling débutante he used to cocktail with at the Ritz.

And the widow whose income was mysterious.

And the pretty dancer in the Follies.

And the brunette in Paris.

And the emerald-eyed houri who smiled enigmatically through Egyptian cigarette smoke . . .

Another kiss . . .

He was still whispering, "You are the very first, darling . . ."

And he will never know that it is because I am *not* the first that I love him so much.

PHILOSOPHY, in a man, is the capacity to see humour in the delight of a girl who has just snared him.

IF a woman were as beautiful as her lover believes her to be, he would have more competition.

A WET man is not afraid of rain, nor an engaged man of sad eyes.

MISTRESS OF THE HORSE

By Richmond Brooks Barrett

CHAPTER I

CHARMIAN MONTAGUE was very happy and at the same time anxious. The irresistible welling of pity in her heart but added to the vague unrest she felt and gave the last luxurious thrill to her senses. She yearned to console, to soothe the man beside her at the luncheon table; instead, she sat up quite straight and laughed at him with cool self-possession.

Thomas Trevena had admitted to her that he felt fagged. He had not gone so far as to confess his head ached; but Charmian knew he was suffering. She could tell how miserable he was from the eyes fixed on her. Few people, when they are not actually racked themselves, can measure the agony of others and respond with full pity; Charmian, however, could intensely understand, indeed could almost draw the victim's pain to herself. So to-day she wanted to nurse Trevena and feel the throb in his temples die out under her firm fingers.

Nobody would have suspected that Charmian was sentimental — nobody, that is, except Trevena. He knew what she was thinking; even as he grinned broadly and treated everybody to ridiculous jokes, he was sure she noticed the dumb bewilderment of pain clouding his gaze. He could always fool her family; it was obvious they considered a man of his sort impervious to physical failings.

This was as it should be. He didn't want the solicitude of anybody in the world but Charmian; her ministrations alone he loved and longed for. Charmian backed him up. At the proper moment she was accustomed to gather him and his headache to her heart; but, by a tacit agreement, she had adopted an offhand coolness towards him when they were not alone together. In company they were, with their painstaking omission of all that was perceptibly tender, for all the world like two small boys chaffing each other.

"You're a fool, Tommy!"

Thus Charmian greeted a sally of Trevena's.

He was unperturbed. "I don't care what anybody says, a rehearsal isn't right. A weddin' would be much more solemn without fixin's. It's no credit to a man and woman to act as if they'd been through it all before. A show for your friends—that's what it is now; pretty soon people'll be hirin' a theatre and sellin' tickets."

"Not a bad idea either," vouchsafed Charmian's father from his end of the table. "Then we could eliminate presents—make a pot of the profits and furnish a house that way."

"Everybody would be nicer, too," Charmian said. "Nowadays the people that give a girl horrid things are sure to be ashamed of themselves and cross. They always do their best to spoil the reception."

Charmian and Trevena were to be married on the following day. The luncheon was a blessed respite from the big entertainments that had been the rule for the past fortnight. The Montagues were simply lunching *en famille* and going at the midday meal with characteristic relish. There were

Mr. and Mrs. Montague; the three daughters; Geoffrey Carter in the capacity of husband of the eldest; Trevena and his cousin, John Fenwick. A gathering of Montagues, actual and prospective, never lacked zest; these people enjoyed one another.

"I wish you could all have seen Tommy at his bachelor dinner," remarked Geoffrey Carter. "He was like the corpse at a wake—just a silent excuse for all the fun."

"So you were a wet blanket!" Agatha, Geoffrey's wife, shook her head at the vision evoked.

"Not a *wet* blanket," demurred Trevena. "I didn't touch a drop y'know."

He nudged Charmian triumphantly after this blaze of wit.

"Personally, I can't picture Willoughby as best man," opined Mr. Montague. "The marriage ceremony is short, to be sure; but it will be too long for Willoughby. He will be chatting with everybody about the altar, interrupting the minister—"

"And winking at Charmian," cut in Geoffrey Carter. "He will try to introduce a ribald note, watch if he doesn't."

"He will do his best to eclipse poor Tommy, of course," said Charmian.

"Why Tommy?" Agatha wanted to know. "A groom is *nothing*, anyhow, at a wedding. Willoughby won't be content unless he gets more attention than the bride's gown."

"The groom is nothing," echoed Trevena. "He's no better than a chorusman or what the vaudeville chaps call a feeder," he sighed. "Oh, Lord!"

That tickled everybody. Trevena joined vociferously in the general laugh.

Luncheon over, he departed.

"Got to meet Willoughby," he explained. "He's pulling in on the four-fifteen."

Charmian slipped out of the drawing-room with him. She closed the door carefully.

Then,

"Does the poor head still ache?" she asked.

"Oh, I'm just kind of tired," replied the ungrammatical Tommy.

Charmian pressed her cool fingers to his throbbing temples.

"Oh, my darling Tommy," she murmured. "Your head is so hot, so hot."

Trevena gathered her to him. A long kiss over, he laughed.

"The damned thing's gone now," he announced.

"Come early to Agatha's dinner," she pleaded.

She was walking beside him, one of his hands in both of hers.

At the street door she relinquished her hold. He kissed her again and was off.

Charmian gave the footman at the door a gay smile. Old Townsend was the only man besides Trevena who ever got a glimpse of the girl off guard.

CHAPTER II

AGATHA CARTER'S dinner was to be followed by a rehearsal of the marriage ceremony. Charmian was confident it would all be perfectly delightful. Agatha's affairs never failed of the right jollity.

Then the rehearsal! Tommy and Willoughby would be ridiculous; Charmian smiled in anticipation of the grotesque capers they might cut. Yes, decidedly it was going to be a lark.

Agatha's guests—that is, all but two of them—arrived with a punctuality quite amazing for slipshod New York. The dilatory two, however, were necessary for the success of the dinner, or so Agatha thought at first; they happened to be Thomas Trevena and Willoughby Hewlett.

The assembled company behaved beautifully in the crisis; Agatha should have loved them all. As a matter of fact, she was so puzzled and angry that her sight soon became blurred by tears; the result was a gradual, kaleidoscopic running-together of her guests into what seemed to the hostess a monster that shrieked after her its need of food.

People *were* noisy; but, far from

complaining about the gnawing of their tummies, they chattered and laughed almost to the point of hysteria in the vain effort to put Agatha at her ease. They would be thunderstruck—so their attitude implied—if anybody should drop the information that dinner ought to have been announced long ago.

The Carter servants at the telephone infuriated Central with their angry outcries. Mrs. Carter herself made sporadic attempts to get into communication with Trevena.

The man at his house gave most unsatisfactory replies to Aggie's vicious questions; the brute seemed to be keeping something back. Mr. Trevena was not at home—that was all. The clubs likewise had nothing to impart in regard to the truant's whereabouts. It was exasperating; it was incredible.

Geoffrey Carter did his best to quiet Agatha. He attempted to reason with her, then to joke lightly.

His wife paid no attention at first; soon, however, the persistent cheerfulness of the man began to irk.

In a flash, she turned on him and rattled out her protest like a very vixen.

Geoffrey retaliated in hot indignation and swore at her. For the remainder of that evening they avoided each other's gaze. Both felt sheepish and guilty.

Charmian, pale and heartsick, at last took matters into her own hands.

"Agatha," she said, "don't be silly. You will have to drop Tommy and Willoughby. You can't keep people waiting any longer."

"I never heard of such conduct!" cried Agatha. "I don't see how you can take it so quietly. The whole thing is an insult to you! Oh, it's disgraceful!"

"I know." Charmian granted it. "But you've got to do something."

"Do something?" Aggie almost shrieked. "Haven't I done everything under God's heaven?"

"Yes, you have." Charmian alone, in this atmosphere of frenzy and madness, remained calm. "They don't deserve such thoughtful treatment. Please cut them and start dinner."

Agatha, her hands on the point of tearing down the elaborate structure reared from her red hair, confronted Charmian:

"But I can't tell the truth, can I?"

"Everybody knows Willoughby," replied Charmian. "People will guess correctly enough."

"But I must give some explanation." Agatha was stubborn.

Then, with apparent irrelevance,

"Everybody knows Tommy, too," she tossed off.

"Go ahead and lie then," exclaimed Charmian, a strident note sounding now in her voice, "only get it over *quickly*."

Agatha, usually very deft at this sort of thing, was for once too bewildered to formulate an excuse.

Charmian supplied one. "Say Tommy is ill—that you've had Willoughby on the wire and he doesn't dare leave him. That is good enough; everybody will know, anyhow, what's wrong."

With a wail of fury, Agatha dashed away to her guests with the alarming tidings.

Charmian, under the spur of fresh inspiration, cut her off in mid-career.

"Agatha, I am going home. You can tell them I've rushed off to the poor dear's bedside. That will simplify everything."

"But they may show up yet," objected Agatha.

"They won't." Charmian was incisive. "And if they do, don't let them in. They wouldn't be fit to appear in company."

Charmian, when she reached her father's house, walked staidly past Townsend and went at once upstairs to her sitting-room. Sinking into a big chair by the fireplace, she remained quite rigid and stiff for a moment; then she put her gloved hands to her face and burst into miserable sobs.

For the first time she was considering with something like terror the weakness of the man she loved; the problems of her future were forcing themselves relentlessly upon her. What was Trevena's appeal, after all?—irrepressible good-nature and a compelling charm! That he had for years been

dissolute she knew; everybody was acquainted with the stories of his capricious, thoughtless progress through life. The people of Charmian's set accepted him without bothering to condemn his actions; even her father could chuckle at the strings of scandalous chronicles regarding Trevena that were current. Brought up short by the prospect of his daughter's possible unhappiness as Tommy's wife, Mr. Montague could clear his conscience facilely by asserting that young wags who had had a fling seldom failed to settle down once they picked the right girl. So society in general dismissed the subject, in spite of the examples everywhere of men who remained delightfully indifferent to common decency after marriage.

For her part, Charmian would have brooked no interference from anybody so far as Trevena was concerned. She had been trained to view masculine lapses with a certain careless levity, with a tinge of frank amusement. She loved Trevena; she could not doubt his infatuation for her. Wasn't that enough? The fact that he was dissipated had never worried her; it but added to his fascination and lent him the power weakness, combined with lovable graciousness, is apt to exert.

Tenderness and a pity approaching the maternal were awakened in Charmian by Trevena's engaging lack of will-power; a quite discernible helplessness in this physically imposing man had from the first arrested her and caused her a tremulous solicitude. She had up to this time had few fears; but to-night she felt frightened at the thought of his irresponsibility.

At last Charmian sat up with decision. She was a fool to act like this. Tommy was a dear; he was adorable, in fact. What more natural than that he should kick over the traces the night before his wedding? She forgave him, of course. He loved her. Surely that was sufficient.

Charmian, as she smoothed her dark hair and stared at the blaze in the fireplace, presented an attractive picture. Her face, thin and without colour, had none of the vulgarity that mere prettiness shows. Her complexion was like an opaque but lustrous film; the tissue seemed as smooth and delicate as gardenia petals and possessed the same glowing pallor. Despite this peculiarity, Charmian did not appear emaciated; rather she had the air of distinction, of macabre beauty. Her eyes, set deep, were dark and very bright, not with an unhealthy glint, but with the sparkle of vivacity. The mouth was large and had an unusual precision of modelling; it was skilfully rouged. Charmian was tall, straight, and thin without angularity.

The telephone at the writing-desk had been buzzing in spasmodic spitefulness for an appreciable time before Charmian noticed it. She silenced the electric disturbance and heard Agatha's voice. The vigorous elder sister could not learn to adapt her tones to the demands of communication over wires. What she was saying was difficult of understanding; it came at Charmian like an ill-suppressed shrieking.

The news was disconcerting. There was as yet no trace of the offenders. Geoffrey Carter and John Fenwick had sallied forth into the night bent on capturing Trevena—at all costs—alive or dead, as Agatha put it. No luck so far! And, Mrs. Carter added, it was well on the road to midnight. The Montagues had just started for home, having delayed as long as possible with the idea of letting Charmian cry it out alone before they showed up.

"But I haven't been crying. How absurd!" Charmian sounded an indignant protest; but Agatha had rung off without waiting to hear it.

The rest of the night was lurid, fiendish.

The Montagues arrived in due time, but without Mr. Montague. He had joined the search party. Irene, the youngest sister, was in tears; Charmian's mother took it upon herself to utter imprecation upon imprecation, all the while striding up and down and wringing her hands. She indignantly refused to go to bed; it was not until

she had sunk exhausted into a chair that she confessed to fatigue.

Then, caught in a cramped doze, she was forced to give up; Charmian bundled her off and thrust her into the arms of a maid with the firm command that she be divested of clothing and tucked willy-nilly between sheets.

Even so, she and Irene ever and again burst in upon Charmian with sleepy excuses. Hadn't they heard the front door? Was Charmian quite sure the telephone hadn't rung?

Irene and Mrs. Montague were really pitiful. They would appear, sometimes swathed in wraps and crazily adjusted slippers, sometimes simply in bare feet and flimsy nightgowns. They would shiver and their teeth would chatter wildly as they stood before Charmian and sought in their poor muddled heads for comforting words before hurrying back to bed. It was all like a fantastic nightmare.

At four in the morning Mr. Montague entered Charmian's sitting-room. To the melancholy headshake with which he greeted his daughter she responded by falling into his arms, there to weep out her weary despair.

"Please go to bed, Charmian dear," he advised. "You must be so tired."

"No, no," she protested. "I can't. Something *may* have happened."

"I almost wish something *had*," he responded, "—for your sake."

Alone once more, Charmian dried her eyes.

Bitter resentment against Trevena had been growing in her heart during the incredibly long hours; but a feeling of pity and a puzzled sense of anxiety had persisted and set her shaking.

Suddenly she thrust everything aside but her anger. That asserted its sway at last.

In a flash she had reached a decision. She would never marry him after this unpardonable treatment; she would go to bed now and *sleep*.

Half undressed, Charmian realized the absurdity of what she was doing. The silence seemed to jangle in her ears an imperious summons to wakefulness. Switching off the lights, she tried the effect of darkness on her nerves; in a moment, she had called back the comfort of the warm radiance. The blackness about her had been of a choking weight, as if she were sinking through deep water.

She threw a dressing-gown over her shoulders and returned to the sitting-room.

At eight in the morning, Agatha again called her. There was a weary rasp to her voice as she announced,

"We haven't found a trace yet, but John has just started off again."

"Please don't bother to hunt any more," replied Charmian. "I have decided not to get married."

This time it was Charmian who rang off abruptly.

CHAPTER III

When Trevena left the Montague house, he decided for a walk to the Grand Central Station. Every step he took jarred his head and sent through it an abominable twinge; but at least the fresh air had a vivifying quality that might help things, even though it failed of the direct, tonic power of healing that Charmian's cool fingers possessed. He therefore sent his motor home and strode with a stoical scowl along the pavement.

"My God, Willoughby," remarked Trevena by way of greeting as he shook his friend's hand. "You don't look as if you'd come from the coast. As neat as a pin, you are; not a devilish bit of dirt on you."

"My name is Phoebus Snow," returned Hewlett, delighted at this atrocious *mot*.

"I'm so glad to get back to New York," he went on. "California is splendid for the health, but it *is* crude. I feel covered with provincial rust, really."

"Same old snob," commented Tommy with enthusiasm. "New York's been dull without you—though your

bein' away has made a man of me, of course."

"Thanks, old chap!" Willoughby smiled. "How's Charmian?"

"Rippin'!" Tommy brightened, despite his racked head. "Charmian wonderful."

"Charmian's a darling," agreed Willoughby. "Look here, Tommy." This after a pause of shrewd appraisal. "You're not looking too damned well."

"I know. I've got a beastly headache," Trevena elucidated.

"Of course you have." Hewlett nodded sagely. "What you need is something to drink. Fancy a man like you on the wagon. Such rot!"

Settled comfortably in Trevena's library, Hewlett returned to the attack.

"Come now, Trevena—I'm thirsty and you're sick. We require stimulants."

Trevena rang promptly.

"I beg your pardon, old man," he apologized. "Drink away. You'll have to excuse me, though."

"Certainly not." Hewlett was firm. "I don't propose to do any solo drinking. Either you join me or I parch before your very eyes."

"It won't do my head any good," Trevena protested. "Besides, when I *am* off it, why go back to it?"

"Go back to it!" Hewlett mocked. "If a man's afraid to take one swallow for sociability's sake, he must be very far gone. You're no gentleman if you've got to such a pass. You'll be talking of cures next."

"Good Lord!" groaned Trevena. "You're still posin', I see. You'll talk of Keeley cures yourself soon enough, I'll wager."

Hewlett stiffened, wide-eyed.

"What under the sun do you mean?" he cried. "I shall never be in danger. I may die of drink one day, but the world at large will know nothing of it. That will be a secret between me and my insides. I shall always be desirable externally. No, indeed! I'm not the type to need a cure."

As he spoke, Hewlett poured out two doughty drinks.

"Now, Burr," he confided to Trevena's man, "take this to that ass over there," indicating Thomas, "and use force if necessary."

Trevena sighed and took the proffered glass.

He closed his eyes and winced.

"I swear," he announced melodramatically, "I could sympathize with a fellow who cut his throat for no other reason than because he had a headache—even if it *was* the day before his weddin'. I'm surprised I haven't done it myself.

"Well, here goes," he wound up. "It *may* do my head good."

Hewlett scowled. "Don't think I'm trying to be a nurse for you; I don't want you to do this for medicinal purposes. The point is, I'm afraid you're a bore unstimulated. And I'm not in the mood to be bored."

Trevena smiled.

"We're a blamed funny pair, aren't we?" he commented.

"We are." Hewlett was prompt. "You haven't any brains; and I'm top-heavy with 'em."

They laughed.

Trevena considered his companion's glib chatter as wit of the highest order. It never occurred to him that practice might get anybody almost as far. He thought Hewlett a charged wire that sparkled and cracked directly it was touched; his admiration was unbounded.

Willoughby had always found it easy to manage Trevena. He would scoff epigrammatically for a few minutes and then dictate terms to his malleable friend. So to-day, professing a reluctance to drink alone, he had been able in less than half an hour to break down the defences poor Trevena had been weeks rearing.

"And Agatha's giving a dinner to-night; and there's to be a rehearsal." Hewlett shook his head several times dubiously. "I declare that's silly; a wedding rehearsal reeks so of innocence and the sweet girl graduate. There's no place for a fellow such as you in that sort of ritual."

"And how about—?"

"Oh, about me?" Hewlett interrupted. "I shall be all right. I am deft enough to be even a sponsor in baptism gracefully. It's not your morals that unfit you for this, Tommy; it's rather your big feet."

Trevena had brightened by this time. The veins in his head that had seemed to the bursting point were throbbing now with a gentler beat. The insistent pound was vaguely muffled at last. He yawned and grinned in bland satisfaction.

"I believe I'm a bit better," he confessed and sheepishly reached for another drink.

Hewlett had already poured himself a fifth glass. So it went. The afternoon wore on and the men became very loquacious, Trevena in a boisterous vein, Hewlett with an increasing felicity of language. Six o'clock found them both unsteady.

"Time to dress for dinner," Hewlett announced, lying flat on the divan with one leg stretched out and the other between his clasped hands.

After this warning, he closed his eyes; he apparently had no intention of getting up.

Trevena gave a slightly rolling nod of assent.

"You're right," he concurred.

Hewlett stirred and half-raised himself.

Then, suddenly lazy, he turned over on his stomach, kicked his heels in air and, with head hanging over the edge of the divan, contemplated the glass on the floor beside him.

"When I say *three*," he admonished, "we must call Burr; he'll see to us."

"Yes, Burr'll see to us," agreed Trevena.

"One, two!" Hewlett paused. "One, two-o-o-o," he continued. "This is as bad as getting up in the morning. One, two-o-o-o—"

But Burr entered at this point without being summoned.

Trevena and Hewlett, obedient and weary, got to their feet. Trevena lost his balance. The other caught him, just in time, at the sacrifice of his own elaborately adjusted equilibrium, and landed with a thud on the divan.

Poor Burr had his hands full, but he at last brought things to a triumphant conclusion. His two charges, rosy and spotless, rallied to each other's side, walked in all ease downstairs, and climbed with success into the motor at the curb.

"Oh, I say." Hewlett examined the clock that hung in front of him. "We're altogether too early for Agatha's party. We'll have to kill a little time, Tommy. Any club will do. We shan't meet a decent soul, no matter where we go; everybody's primping now for dear Aggie."

They stopped at the nearest club and found a convivial band assembled. Although Mrs. Carter had not favoured these souls with invitations to her dinner, they were extremely cordial to Trevena. Hewlett, for this one night quite willing to be merely his friend's satellite, joined with the other lusty bachelors in toasting and jollying the groom-to-be. It was all very boisterous, not to say noisy.

Willoughby soon found that his quiet, sly pleasantries were wasted in the tumult around him; he therefore smiled condescendingly, grimaced now and then in Trevena's direction (just to let Tommy know these fellows tickled his aristocratic soul) and proceeded to shout things as obvious as any his companions delivered. He was just intoxicated enough to be delighted with hubbub.

Trevena, on his side, was jubilant. This delicious haze around him, through which he seemed to spin smoothly, was no end comforting. Warm gratitude towards the roisterers surged over him; he drank everything in sight because he had an idea it would please the chaps.

At last Willoughby made up to him; it was almost, thought Trevena, as if old Hewlett were swimming through the heavy atmosphere.

"Tommy," shouted Willoughby above the din, "it's nine-thirty. Do you

hear?—nine-thirty. Too late for Aggie's."

Trevena staggered and came up against the wall with a thud. His intelligence, like a keen wind, cut for a moment the fumes inside his head.

"Good God!" he cried.

"We've got to do—" he frowned and deliberated with intensity—"something."

"Yes, but what?" Hewlett seemed unable to cope with the problem. "Can we ring up Aggie?"

"No, no." Trevena groped about in the darkness closing in on his brain. "It's too late—to tell—Aggie."

He rolled his head from side to side against the wall. The headlong whirl through space was beginning to get on his nerves.

For a time the two were silent, while their bibulous friends still went on toasting them.

"There's just one thing to do." Hewlett grasped Trevena's arm and proceeded to stammer out a plan; but his companion, deafened by the pound of blood in his ears, heard only a word here and there:

"Rooms—get us out of it—done it before."

His head continued its rolling motion; he was too fagged to attempt a question.

"How about it?" Hewlett urged.

Trevena sagged slightly by way of assent.

All at once a wave of blackness swept across his eyes. The next thing he knew, he was lying on his back somewhere and holding up a glass quite nonchalantly. He saw Willoughby stumble towards him, catch his foot against a chair and collapse resignedly.

Trevena sat up in bewilderment. Again the rifted blackness! He felt himself falling, gathering breakneck impetus as he hurtled down, down—He began to shout in terror; there was a sound of shattered glass—

Trevena woke with a start. John Fenwick was leaning over him, shaking him savagely by the shoulders. Tommy's intelligence stirred at the moment when a vicious pain stabbed at his eyes. He stared about him. He noticed a broken glass, an overturned decanter. Why, damn it, he was on the floor! And there was Sargent's portrait of old Mrs. Fenwick contemplating him frivolously from the wall. Trevena indulged in a wry smile and an unintelligible mutter. Fenwick, a melancholy expression of disgust on his face, continued his mauling and tugging for some time.

"Now get up!" he commanded at length.

Trevena, like a little boy about to be whipped, obeyed. Fenwick guided him to a bed-chamber, helped him to get out of his clothes, and disappeared.

On the way back to his disordered den, John opened a door and looked into another bed-chamber; there lay Willoughby Hewlett, deep in slumber and smiling much as rosy cherubs smile.

CHAPTER IV

THE wedding, at high noon, was brilliant. St. Thomas's had never held a more fashionable throng. Gossip was rife before the dignified ceremony began; the story of the night before was spreading and filling the church not less effectively than the odour of the roses and the triumphant bursts of the organ.

"Poor John Fenwick was on the hunt the entire night, you know, and the wretches were in his apartment all the time," confided one matron to another.

"But why, in Heaven's name, did they choose John's place? Of all the anti-climaxes to a real spree, my dear!"

"Willoughby got his addresses mixed." So went the pretty whisper behind a prayer-book elsewhere in the saintly edifice. "He expected—well you can guess what Willoughby expected." A subdued sound of laughter. "And they were so far gone they *couldn't* get out."

"Poor Willoughby! But I am glad for Tommy's sake." A note of genuine sympathy here. "It would have been terrible for the poor boy—*that*."

A beautiful creature strewn with pearls had the true version of the escapade:

"They wanted John to get them out of the scrape—not showing up at Agatha's, you know—and to make up some tale the Montagues would swallow. But of course it never occurred to *John* to go home; and there was poor Willoughby alone with Tommy and John's whisky."

"They'd given up the search and John dashed back to his rooms for a nap; I don't think he got it!" interpolated a man.

One thing mystified everybody.

"How in the world has Willoughby managed to sleep it off and to achieve that wonderful colour and to get the story going—all in four hours?"

That was the way someone voiced the general amazement.

"Willoughby can do anything—except what's decent," explained a heavenly blonde.

A gentle stir at the entrance!

The bride had arrived.

People smiled and shook their heads wisely. It did not occur to anyone to wonder at Charmian for going through with the business. It would have been absurd to break it off; Tommy Trevena was a dear—he would make an ideal husband for any girl.

Charmian, very pale in her superb gown, moved slowly through the hush to the altar.

At first, upon reaching Trevena's side, she stood quite still, her head lowered. She delivered the words required of her with perfect precision and distinctness; not once did she look at Trevena. Several times, however, her eyes met those of the radiant Hewlett.

Then, with a subdued whisper of garments, Charmian knelt beside her husband. At last she raised her head and looked full into his haggard face. She took the measure of his beseeching repentance, of his anguished self-abasement. A tender smile suddenly played over her lips; she had forgiven him everything. Love and intense pity flooded her.

With difficulty she kept back the tears of mingled happiness and gentle, solicitous melancholy.

CHAPTER V

CHARMIAN, during her stately progress to the altar, was unhappy. The dumb despair in her mother's face, thrust ludicrously in at the door of the sitting-room, had made the girl turn from the telephone that morning with a message of comfort.

"Don't mind what I've just told Agatha," she had said. "Of course, dear, I'm going to marry Tommy—if he's ever found."

Mrs. Montague had burst into noisy sobs:

"Oh, my darling! You don't deserve this; *you*, the sweetest child in the world!"

Charmian had soothed her mother, patting the heaving shoulders, and dabbing at the rivulets of tears.

"There, there, old silly. Now, you mustn't have red eyes."

So preparations had gone on quietly; the news of Trevena's capture found the Montagues ready. Charmian had striven to give her laugh just the right tone of triumph; but she had felt in her heart a weary protest, a sense of wanton self-sacrifice, of desecration.

Then, kneeling beside Trevena, she had forgotten all this. A happiness so complete as to send a thrill of faintness through her was Charmian's when she left the altar with her husband.

The weeks that followed were of a radiance unparalleled in the lives of Charmian and Trevena. The conventional honeymoon — even the word *honeymoon*—antagonized these two. They refused to consider a lazy, itinerant month in a private car; a gay jaunt over the crowded continent of Europe did not appeal to them.

After all, it was a critical period; they realized that. There were difficult problems to be threshed out during the long days; it was downright unhealthy, so they reasoned, to sit about with nothing to do but brood. Fresh air, sun-

shine and vigorous activity should fill the days. They therefore made with all speed for Trevena's camp in the Adirondacks. They tramped for long hours at each other's side, controlling their strides and their thoughts to a rhythmic beat. Runs on horse-back set their pulses to bounding in harmony. Everything, in fact, helped in the conscious adjustment of one being to another's needs.

Charmian, the matron, responding with enthusiasm to the necessity for an enlarged mental horizon, urged her husband on to discreet confessions of what his past had been—"what *you* took me out of," was his way of putting it. He was just frank enough in his disclosures; an unsuspected soundness of judgment and appreciation of delicacy were evidenced in the tales he told.

Charmian's attitude was by no means one of curiosity. She did not relish the anecdotes; somehow, this was quite different from the gossip she was accustomed to.

Of course, she could not help being amused and delighted at times; some of the things he recounted were extremely droll. For the most part, however, the motive of both Charmian and Trevena was to clear away all possible past scores. They were very earnest; they were even, for all their sophistication, naïve.

One morning, as they swung together over the rough road, Trevena seemed strangely ill at ease. He scowled a good deal and shot furtive, quizzical glances at Charmian; the stick he carried wrought havoc among the young leaves that bordered the path.

At last he blurted out:

"I say, Charmian, do you remember that year I was gone on Phyllis Parker?"

Charmian shook her head. "Why, no. Phyllis was married before I came out. I hadn't begun to follow your career then. Her wedding was a great event—the first time I wore my hair up."

"I was damned silly over Phyllis. Do you know—" he could grin sheepishly at the recollection—"I almost shot myself that day."

Charmian stared, wide-eyed, at him. "You cared—so much?"

She was silent for a moment.

Then, with a shrug at the banality of what she said:

"I suppose it took you fully a week to get over it."

"It took me two years." He shook his head in solemn candour. "Why, would you believe it, I used to think *you* didn't compare with Phyllis. I'm tellin' you this just to show what an ass I was, y'know. It wasn't till about a year ago I began to see you were much more rippin' than her."

He was clumsy; but the adoring smile he flashed timidly at Charmian reassured her.

"But I'm certainly *not* more wonderful than Phyllis." Charmian half closed her eyes to call up the image of her rival. "She is prettier and sweeter and better than I. She was too good for you, Tommy."

"Of course she was," he admitted, "but so are you. You're too good for any man."

"Nonsense!" Charmian was firm. "In many ways I'm low—as low as you are." She laughed. "You and I may hit it off; you and Phyllis—never."

"She had *no* use for me. And Willoughby, y'know—oh, Willoughby shocked her no end."

He still peered with anxious eyes into Charmian's face.

"Phyllis is a prig!" he announced.

"You say that because she did the just thing, because she hurt you by being upright. You are unfair."

"No, I swear she's a snifflin' prig," he protested. "I haven't any patience with her type, I tell you. I fell for her because she was pretty, that's all."

"And why, pray, did you fall for me?" Charmian confronted him sharply. "Because I was pretty or because I didn't expect a man to be decent?"

She broke off, confused.

Without realizing it, Charmian had

been judging herself while she talked. She had set herself up beside the righteous Phyllis and had winced in presence of the other's purity. She was cheapened, her rival exalted. Somehow, this harmless anecdote hurt more than all the accounts of chorus-girl mistresses that had gone before.

She was sorry directly she had struck out.

"I don't mean that, Tommy," she remarked. "But it *is* easy to pick up what you say. You blunder so."

Trevena laughed out a hearty acknowledgment.

"I'm damned glad I told you, anyhow," he said. "Now I've got a clean slate. Funny, isn't it?—I dreaded speakin' to you about her."

"I wonder," ruminated Charmian, dropping Phyllis for the moment, "whether many married people spend their first weeks confessing things. Just suppose I hadn't been able to forgive you; think how miserable we should have been. Why didn't you tell over your sins while I still had a chance to back out?"

"Oh, come, Charmian." Trevena faced her. "You knew about me long ago. You knew I was no innocent kid."

She gave him a shrewd smile. "It was because I knew you *were* an innocent 'kid' that I married you. You are guileless."

One of her shoe-laces had come untied and was whipping about her leg as she walked. She paused and thrust out her foot in Trevena's direction. While he stooped and went to work at the little boot with his great hands, Charmian brushed his forehead with her lips.

"I hate your Phyllis," she told him. "She was a fiend to treat you so abominably."

"I'm jolly thankful to her for turnin' me down," he said.

"Ah, so am I," she agreed. "But *why* did the wretch have the refusal of you? That I can't forgive her."

Trevena had by this fashioned a neat bow. He got up, grasped her hand and they strode off again in silence.

CHAPTER VI

THE summer at Trevena's place on Long Island was a happy one. Charmian and her husband made a merry pair; their union seemed less a marriage than a boisterous companionship. It was a misfortune that Charmian should be so vigorous, that she should take everything at the man's side and as his equal; she by no means realized this, however.

Had she been physically fragile, Trevena would have responded to the need in her of protection and delicate handling; but the wiry agility she boasted made her perfectly self-reliant. Indeed, Trevena's headaches constituted the only pangs the summer brought forth.

Charmian, with an enthusiasm that delighted her and tickled her husband, shared everything with him. The tendency in Trevena to be expansively vulgar and Rabelaisian at first was kept under control by him; but before long, the temptation to cause the girl a blush now and then was not to be withstood. He was rewarded beautifully.

Poor Charmian, thinking it silly to be so easily shocked, determined on a bolder front. The result was an ever-increasing licence on Trevena's part and an acceptance from Charmian that grew to what must have struck the man as positive relish. At last she became frightened and desperately ashamed; but it was too late then to convince Trevena of her sincere desire to recapture some of the old, fine reticence. The general tone of things had been pitched for good and all.

Submitting anew, Charmian in short order found to her despair that her response had even a touch of eagerness. She had begun to like coarseness.

Trevena, like many men who have led a free and easy life, needed a wife whom he could reverence, who should have no point of resemblance with the unconscionable wantons that had contributed to his former exploits. Charmian, as he had believed intensely, was the sort to create an atmosphere of charming reserve and to be always the

creature of delicacy and purity. This would have been her true medium; but, by the conscious effort to share frankly all things with him, she had forced herself out of her natural development and had taken from him the right to worship repentant at her shrine. Charmian had made the fatal error of lowering herself to the plane of her husband's past enthusiasms.

For the most part, things went beautifully. They devoted every minute to each other. Trevena's estate was a big one and answered all needs. There was a substantial stretch of wood, through which a broad walk wound with a final dip straight to the water's edge. A bath-house nestled in the belt of trees that bordered the secluded beach. It was quite perfect here for swimming. Far out bobbed the little float. Jutting headlands guarded the place and lent a romantic privacy to it. Interlaced branches had the effect of filtering the sun's beams. The water was of deepest blue checkered with gold.

In this spot Charmian and Trevena spent a good part of the mornings. It was a rather furtive, sylvan solitude they enjoyed. Trevena strode and splashed about untrammelled by a bathing-suit. This thrilled them both and added just the proper tang of paganism.

The stables were full of fine beasts. Charmian loved to show off for her husband's benefit her knowledge of horses and her glibness in sporting lore. She was not very well grounded; her frequent blunders on the subject of studs and all the rest of it delighted Trevena. He had for years been a keen judge of horseflesh and a successful exhibitor at shows. He took his wife in hand, brushed her up as it were, and, finding her an apt pupil, soon had her out of the rudimentary stages.

She drove his teams prettily and in general qualified as a competent "mistress of the horse"—this a title Charmian early took as her right. They had many an uproarious afternoon in the tan-bark ring. Her slender wrists were like steel before the end of the summer; they could control with flexible power the liveliest pair of stallions to be found.

The Trevenas neglected their friends deliberately and appeared in civilized centres as seldom as possible. There were a few visits to be made, of course; but these were got over with disconcerting speed. Tennis and golf seemed stale and insipid. So did everything that took them away from their irresponsible, rough-and-tumble manner of living. Mrs. Montague pleaded and scolded.

"You will be nothing but tramps in six months," she wrote once. "You will forget your manners, of course. I'm surprised Thomas isn't letting his beard grow yet. And, Charmian, dearest, don't get in the habit of leaving off your corsets."

"I say," remarked Trevena one evening, after a prodigious yawn, "isn't it great about my drinkin'? I certainly have got it down to a system—isn't that so? And my headaches aren't bad any more. I tell *you*, it was goin' without it altogether that gave me such damned headaches."

Charmian indulged in a dainty counterpart of her husband's yawn and accompanied it with a luxurious stretch.

"It's splendid," she agreed.

"Still—" and she straightened, throwing off her sleepiness, "I don't know. Sometimes I think it's wrong to drink as you do. You get away with a good deal—now don't you, Tommy?"

"Oh, rot!" He was not disconcerted. "I could tell if it was hurtin' me."

"Perhaps." Charmian frowned, watching him pour himself a drink. "But father always said the man who did it steadily was worse than the man who went on sprees and then between times took nothing. And I don't think your headaches are a bit less severe."

Trevena grinned and stopped the argument in his usual way with a hearty kiss.

The Piping Rock Show in September found the Trevenas on the scene. A string of their best horses was entered. It was Charmian's initiation into the

free and easy set that graces a ring. She was distinctly thrilled by it all. The feverish rush behind scenes was stimulating. It was so jolly to sit, straight and quivering, reins in hand and a pair of champing, foam-flecked beasts in front of her, to hear the nervous snorts and to wait for the moment when the groom should let go the bridles and race to safety on the box behind her, to see the gates swing open before her and finally to sweep into the lists.

Charmian loved the sound of leathern girths straining, the muffled beat of hoofs, the rush of air as her team forged ahead and sent the tan-bark flying about the ears of the loungers at the rail. The sense of peril, of power over the plunging animals, the realization of the fierce challenge to her slight strength the horses flung at her—all this set her heart pounding violently. The admiration of the spectators fascinated her, too. She wore the daintiest, most cloud-like frocks she possessed. It was like striding the blast, careering through space, guiding triumphantly the chariot of the Sun.

Charmian on her first appearance had been so unstrung by her daring fleetness that she almost lost control of things. Wheeling around the ring at a high clip, she had heard through the confused tramping and din a clang of metal, then another clatter.

The phaeton gave a slight jolt and she shot a terrified glance to the rear. She had knocked down two of the slender posts set up to mark the inner barrier of the course; one of the posts had fallen between the spokes of her rear wheel and was making a spiteful racket.

The groom leaped down, got the thing disentangled and sprang back to position. Charmian had communicated her uncertainty through the reins to her horses. They broke step; one of them reared and kicked while they still sped around the ring.

The phaeton was deflected from its course and girded against the fence. People jumped back from the rail.

Charmian was on the point of crying out in terror when there came a sudden pause in the tumult. Her team had halted, the competent groom at their heads. Everything was all right.

Charmian, noticing to her chagrin that the pair behind had swung out and passed her, felt her courage return in a rush. She signalled the groom to let go and started again, this time with angry confidence. There were no more mishaps; but poor Charmian left the scene at the conclusion of the class without a ribbon of any sort to her credit. She clenched her teeth and determined to win out at any cost on her next appearance.

Before the end of that afternoon she had a blue ribbon and two reds in her possession.

Charmian's box held a gay crowd at all times. Most of the people were new to her. Conservative Newport was the summer gathering place of her friends. This conspicuously bright and noisy throng rather bewildered her and caused her unwonted fits of shyness at first. Eager and cordial as she was, however, she soon had struck the proper stride. After that, it was very exhilarating.

Charmian at times felt a pang; she knew how Mrs. Montague deplored this racing set and the "horsey talk." Indeed, Charmian had received that very morning a long letter of reproof and exhortation from her mother.

"You know," asserted the lady, "that I heartily disapprove of the sort of thing horse shows stand for. It's all right, of course, to have your box and to be on hand as an *onlooker*. That I advise; at least, I advise it for the Newport show,. where one is with one's friends. That makes all the difference between a social function and a promiscuous brawl. But I thought when you married Thomas you would make him give up exhibiting. It isn't right—it's dangerous, Charmian dear—to let him keep up this gadding about to horse shows. He has been alone in the world for fifteen years, remember. You *must* learn to understand how a

wife should act. Above all, don't drive for him; you know I think that vulgar. And *don't* let queer people get into your box. You can be firm and polite about such things and nobody will feel injured."

Charmian knew the letter by heart. She had pondered over the high message it contained and had been unable to hush completely the clarion-call of her conscience. She even shivered a bit when she looked at Mrs. Paradise, who sat beside her, shouting effusions and breathing out alcoholic fumes. Queer people! "Disreputable people," would have been Mrs. Montague's term had she looked in on her daughter's guests.

Trevena had explained things to Charmian. He had protested that "the bunch was all right, just a bit rough, perhaps — nothin' to worry about, y'know."

Of course a show wasn't a Sunday School convention, he hastened to add. The bunch wouldn't expect to hit up any lasting friendship with Charmian; they were the type to realize she would draw the line somewhere. They wouldn't expect invitations to the Trevena country-place. On a devil-may-care occasion of this sort, however, they were not to be snubbed. Take Gwen Ditson, for instance—a good sport in her way, even though she *was* a professional.

"You mustn't treat her like a groom, dear, just because she rides my saddle horses," Trevena had warned.

Charmian, with considerable asperity, had let him know she would be quite able to act graciously to people of that class, without sacrificing one jot of matronly dignity.

There were moments when Charmian was extremely uneasy and not a little resentful. Somehow, she felt that her husband ought not to have brought her within range of the questionable crew. He had been beyond doubt guilty of a breach of chivalry.

Trevena, on his side, suffered from misgivings; but, damn it all, wasn't Charmian clever enough to see how difficult it would be to keep out of things? She had revelled in the prospect of driving; he hadn't by any means proposed the lark.

Still, he couldn't for all his self-communings consider himself quite innocent. Perhaps he was vaguely aware that in the few months of his married life he had kicked the pedestal from under Charmian. The frank good-fellowship of her as an equal was charming, to be sure; and the sense of desecration was pretty well deadened by the vividness of the relation. Still, Trevena ever and again found himself worrying and fretting.

The exhibitors' dinner went off like the pop of a champagne cork. Trevena got as drunk as the others and at the end of the festive banquet was in no condition to go home. On the pressing invitation of Willoughby Hewlett, he finished out the night at the Paradise establishment. Mr. Paradise voiced an enthusiastic welcome; Willoughby's inimitable wink answered for the hostess's readiness to receive any friend of his under her roof.

Charmian, arriving at Piping Rock in a motor for the last day of the Horse Show, found that her husband had accepted the Paradise hospitality for another night—for her as well as for himself.

She started an indignant protest, but noticing in a flash that Trevena was in a condition of racked befuddlement, she decided to accept the inevitable.

"Oh, another thing!" Trevena had announced. "There's some sort of fool bazaar to-morrow. I said you'd help—at a booth, y'know."

"Very well," said Charmian. "But after this, please don't make plans for me without letting me know."

The afternoon left her with nerves frayed. It was the day of tandem and four-in-hand classes. Trevena drove his horses on both occasions and fared badly. The tandem got into a sorry mix-up once right in front of the Trevena box; Tommy cursed audibly and laughed out an apology for his clumsiness to the gallery. No sooner had that

difficulty been straightened than he narrowly escaped running down one of the ring attendants. It took the spectators, a shrewd crowd, but a few moments to get the significance of Trevena's unwonted blunders; "Tommy Trevena's bleary," ran the rumour.

Charmian heard a gay interchange on the subject when she was pushing her way out through the throng to the team that awaited her for the next class. It was a championship affair and she lost from sheer nervousness. Later, during the four-in-hand exhibition, she with difficulty kept herself from trembling. It went surprisingly well, however; Trevena seemed alert and masterful. The precise pounding of his horses' feet never wavered from the true beat; the smooth jingle of trappings inspired confidence. Trevena got his blue ribbon. The polite acclamations over, he thundered through the gate at a smart trot.

Charmian was just sinking back with relief in her chair when she saw her husband impatiently whip a hand to his aching head. One of the horses missed its footing and swerved. The four-in-hand lurched. The shout the scurrying bystanders emitted sent a numbing chill through her. Willoughby Hewlett, who was in the Trevena box, gave a subdued exclamation.

Faint and very white, Charmian got up.

With a decisive gesture, she beckoned Willoughby to follow her; then, apparently quite calm, she hurried to the gate.

Trevena was kneeling in the midst of the pushing, eager crowd. A man lay stretched on the ground.

Charmian put a hand to her clamorous heart; there was blood on the white fence.

"Is the guy dead?" asked a tense, inquisitive voice.

"Sure!" came a delighted response.

The man had been kicked in the head by one of the horses. Despite the cocksure information vouchsafed by his companion at the rail, he was not dead.

"A fractured skull—dangerous but not necessarily fatal," was the doctor's verdict.

Charmian and Willoughby offered deft aid; Trevena, bewildered and horror-stricken, was helpless and rather a hindrance. He was soon led away.

After the injured man had been shipped on a stretcher to the hospital, Willoughby turned to Charmian. The deadly seriousness with which he had taken it all and the enthusiastic service he had tendered, caused him now a reaction of positive shame. He should have been less bowled over, he thought; a few irrepressible jests would have saved his cynical skin—so he reasoned.

"'Pon my word," he remarked to Charmian, "we're lucky. The fellows around here seem to know the chap. They say he's all alone in the world—no family of any kind. I never believed it possible to find such a case; knock a man down and at once a wife and ten children are about your ears. That's the usual thing, isn't it? It was decent of the man not to have connections, don't you think?"

Charmian nodded. She knew quite well Willoughby didn't mean a word of this chaff. She slipped a hand through the crook of his arm and together they walked away.

The show was still going on. Charmian heard the whirr of wheels, the patter of hoofs in the enclosure. Over the fence, horses' heads and flushed riders rushed past. The boxes, a blur of colour, might have been a vast flowerbed. A bugle blew, summoning the next class.

All at once, Charmian reeled; great weights seemed tied to her knees, dragging her down. With a little cry, she stumbled and fell before Willoughby could catch her.

CHAPTER VII

CHARMIAN got through dinner that night very well. The Paradise guests adopted a subdued tone at first. The accident was touched on with a delicacy that was most impressive, the hostess considered.

"At the show two years ago my husband brought a man down. A compound fracture of the leg, wasn't it, Henry?" Mrs. Paradise was deliberately vague as to details; she seemed to be pointing the usualness of the occurrence.

"I believe it was," concurred Paradise, with a reflective nod.

"He recovered in a short time—really remarkable," went on the lady.

"They all do; you can't kill them." This from Paradise was a bit tactless.

"People shouldn't be allowed to crowd the gates; accidents are simply unavoidable." Mrs. Paradise followed it through.

"It isn't *right*," said Hewlett. "The fellows are always dashing around under the horses' hoofs. There should be more policemen to look after things."

Charmian, after a polite affirmative, let the subject drop.

"I am so sorry you didn't exhibit this year," she told Mrs. Paradise. "I remember the triumphant career of Lady Gay Spanker; how she did run away with things at Newport!"

That lightened the tone somewhat. The painful duty of condolence over, everybody rallied. Well-bred gaiety came to the fore and the dinner wound up in merriment. Trevena alone failed to do his part; he was obviously miserable and moody and kept a footman busy filling his glass.

Charmian early confessed to fatigue and went to bed. In her room she cried a little; her maid petted and comforted her to no purpose.

Lying back at last among the pillows, Charmian, with closed eyes, sighed.

"Tell my husband I am asleep, if he enquires," she warned. "I don't want to see anyone."

She did not sleep, however. A confused uproar floated in through the open windows. A string orchestra was strumming; the merrymaking, tempered to a pleasant babble by the hush of the night air, was rather soothing.

Charmian stared up into the darkness and quivered with sobs. She had never before given way to such desperate discouragement. The peril of Trevena's weakness confronted her and inspired absolute terror. She felt helpless and unhappy. It was not that she was torturing herself with questions or tiring her brain with endless problems that could not be solved. She did not think at all. She simply lay there and trembled. There was a dull, unreasoning passivity in her attitude. She was the abject victim of fear—that was all. The hours dragged on. She did not even hear the climacteric din from the ballroom. The music kept up its unflagging vivacity; the tide of mirth was persistent in its flow. Charmian was unconscious of any noise. She wept and was afraid. She did not know why.

In the morning, long before the erstwhile revellers had so much as turned over in their beds, Charmian had her motor brought around. Half an hour later she was at the hospital.

The injured man was still unconscious, but the nurses expressed most hearty assurances of his improvement. Charmian was gracious and firm. She would like to see the man, she said; when the attendants hesitated, she insisted that she *must* see him. Bending over the bed, she examined with intense scrutiny the face of the sufferer; the distortion of the features had taken on an inflexible, frozen rigidity.

Charmian could not repress a shudder; it seemed to her impossible that a countenance so locked in an expression of anguish could ever relax. All the while, the nurse at her elbow whispered encouragement. The doctor was delighted with the man's condition, she asserted.

Charmian, when she had returned to the Paradise house, unlocked the door between her bedchamber and her husband's; in his darkened room she hesitated a moment before rousing him. As she looked down at Trevena, she saw with startling distinctness the face of the injured man. Trevena lay on his back, his head twisted slightly to one side. There was a bold grace to the curve of the powerful neck; the

tendons and muscles were rooted firmly in the hollow above the collar-bone.

Charmian thought with a pang of the warped and ropy sinews in the other man's skinny neck. Trevena's mouth was shut, but with an easy immobility. He was still flushed with drink. The dishevelled black locks, the sprouting beard and the comfortable relaxation of the arms flung above his head gave him the appearance of insolence and sensuality.

Charmian shook him vigorously.

For a time he remained oblivious to mauling; at last, however, there was a quiver under his closed lids. Then his eyes opened. He yawned, swore sleepily, and, perceiving Charmian, sat up.

She stepped back in time to avoid his boisterous hug.

"I want to talk seriously," she announced. "I have just come from the hospital. I saw the man. They say he is improving, but it's not true."

She shivered as Trevena gave another bewildered yawn.

"I saw the man," she repeated, "and I *know* he is dying. He is dying—oh—I haven't a doubt of it."

All the terror of the night came back in an overwhelming rush and she began to sob hysterically.

Trevena sprang out of bed. He took her in his arms and kissed her.

"Don't be such a baby, dear," he protested. "Of course they know better than you; the doctor can tell how the chap is. You're fagged, Charmian dear; just stop worrying. It will be all right. Forget it."

"Forget it!" she cried, furious. "I can't take a thing like this lightly. I'm not able to think, 'Well, it was the man's fault, anyhow,' and then go and get drunk and be happy. You are brutal and selfish. You don't understand me, because I have pity, because I should never forgive myself if he died. Ah, you should be *ashamed!*"

She broke away from him and rushed back to her own room. The door slammed to behind her and she locked it with a vicious turn of the key.

At luncheon, Mrs. Paradise beamed upon the assembled company. Some of the people gathered about her were inclined to be grumpy and sarcastic; heads were still heavy after the dance. Not so Mrs. Paradise's. She had that morning been heroic; naturally the remembrance of her altruism fascinated her.

"I just dashed over to the hospital myself," she announced in the loudest voice she could command.

Realizing that everybody had not heard, she waited for a lull before she went at it again.

"I dashed over myself this morning to the hospital," she once more cried. "The man is doing beautifully. He had almost regained consciousness when I left. A fortnight will see him on his feet again. It was such a relief to hear it; I really cried I was so delighted."

"You are very kind," said Charmian.

She had by this time gained control of herself. A bulletin had come every hour over the wire—"A steady gain," she was told and was at last won into believing what the surgeon said.

The thought of her silly tirade at Trevena's expense had caused her a vague feeling of guilt; she came down to luncheon determined on conciliating him.

He had given her a sheepish smile and she had responded with pretty timidity. She had stiffened, however, at the unmistakable sway in his gait.

Motors were already snorting at the door before the ices were served. There was a general rush up the stairs for the purpose of a last surrender to maids; for, of course, the costume one wears at a charity bazaar must be impeccable, else sales might suffer. Nobody buys lavishly from a woman whose rouge has been applied with unseemly haste.

The waiting automobiles were allowed to snort out their impatience for a good half hour before the occupants of the guest-chambers saw fit to sally forth to the encounter. Mrs. Paradise paced the entrance hall and despatched footmen on the unavailing errand of knocking at doors; she herself sent

plaintive cries at intervals up the stairwell.

The fête had begun hours ago, she complained to the empty air; they would be late, late, so late. The guests responded when the sense of their own achieved perfection moved them.

Lawn fêtes for multifarious institutions were at this period in their young prime; people still loved them and found in them the zest of novelty. No resort boasted more than two or three such affairs a season; it is only in the last half dozen years that bazaars have flaunted welcoming pennons before the passer-by several times a week. To have one's estate chosen for the gala event used to be a privilege one sought. Indeed, Mrs. Paradise on this day nursed a considerable grievance; her lawn had been passed over by the Bazaar Committee in favour of a greensward quite ill-tended by comparison. Still, since personal pride must be swallowed on an occasion where the public weal alone is considered, Mrs. Paradise had consented to construct, equip and manage the Dairy at this particular fête.

This Dairy was destined for popularity, once the inner workings became known. The little edifice was charming and spotless. The rusticity of it was probably not authentic; but that did not matter. At dainty tables under a trellis the Paradise guests served creamery products. The buttermilk was voted delicious, as was the cheese. There never was seen a lovelier set of milkmaids than those of Mrs. Paradise's choosing. Even the Petit Trianon knew not such costumes.

"Be sure to wear white—pannier effect if possible," Mrs. Paradise had commanded.

The result may well be imagined. The menials at the Dairy floated about in creations for all the world like puffs of summer cloud. The beauty of the waitresses and their gowns would in itself have been enough to draw crowds to the pretty, secluded spot. But there was still another attraction, known only to the select few, and yet a source of revenue far more substantial than buttermilk could bring.

Behind a white door marked *PRIVATE* in blue letters was a room where the churns and things were kept. Throughout the long afternoon shouts of mirth could be heard from this sanctum; evidently the labour of whipping butter into shape was not irksome to the staff Mrs. Paradise had collected.

Strings of hilarious men kept strolling through the latticed lunchroom; a series of strange taps never failed to produce an effect. The door would swing open; shouts of welcome from the mysterious interior would assail the ears of the unelect buttermilk sippers. Then the door would shut with a slam. When the men reappeared, they were always more boisterous than they had been on entering. They were apt to bump against tables and jog the sharp elbows of spinsters indulging in ice-cream or rustic beverages. One school teacher who had come a long distance at the call of charity was so jostled that she spilled buttermilk down the front of her blouse, thereby ruining that precious garment.

If the truth be told, the fair women who served as milkmaids in the lunchroom became barmaids once they passed the threshold of the door marked *PRIVATE*. Champagne flowed within more freely than milk. Had the news of the "speak-easy" ever leaked out, execration from all sides would have been the order of the day. As it was, the rector of the church that had been sponsor for the fête took occasion on the following Sunday to signal out for special commendation the Dairy and to remark on the astounding sums raised therein.

It was indeed festive in the "Fizzery," as it was jocosely termed, and Charmian could not help having a beautiful time. She mixed drinks until her arms ached; she wheedled big sums out of people; she learned to "jolly" like the best of them. Willoughby Hewlett acted as a sort of major-domo. He consumed prodigious amounts, but without the slightest let-up in his ab-

surd prattle. Through a hole in the white door he kept surveying the lunch-room; his comments on the demure patrons were very racy.

"I say," he whispered once, "there's a dear old girl out there—she's simply glued on this orb of mine. There! I winked at the darling, I did." He chuckled. "Up she gets, I swear. She's leaving, and her ice-cream not half eaten! Oh, I *am* sorry."

Trevena, too, was very sportive. Charmian had relented and he gambolled about delightedly under her indulgent gaze. The prices he paid for drinks soon set people to gasping.

"Don't let Tommy out," protested Hewlett. "No lady parishioner would be safe; and, above all, we must have decorum. No, don't let Tommy loose."

Six o'clock found the haunters of the speak-easy with empty pockets. Willoughby called for a search.

"Not one penny leaves this room," he shouted. "Every man get in line; we don't trust you."

Trevena started for the door in haste. He was at once seized. There was a hot scramble; at the end of it, Trevena tumbled to the floor. Pinned down by his indignant friends, he struggled and protested while the hunt went on. With a cry of horror, Willoughby extracted a hundred-dollar bill from somewhere. Mrs. Paradise led the resultant merriment much in the fashion of cheer-leader.

At that moment a footman from the Paradise house pushed open the door.

Charmian caught his expression of anxiety.

She went over to him.

"Madame," he announced, very low, "the doctor has telephoned. He says the man is dead—unlooked-for complications, I believe."

Chariman gave her husband a swiftly appraising glance. He had got up and, with a rueful smile, was brushing the straw from his coat.

"Well, damn you," he was saying, "that's good for another bottle, isn't it? You've got to give a man his money's worth, y'know."

He staggered as he spoke.

Charmian turned once more to the footman. "Tell Mrs. Paradise I have been called away."

She opened the door and went out.

CHAPTER VIII

CHARMIAN reached home at ten o'clock that night. She had settled everything at the hospital. Then guessing that the fête would be over, she had returned to the Paradise house.

Mrs. Paradise met her with wild protestations of sympathy and sorrow; it was almost like professional ululation.

Charmian hastened to calm her hostess and to point out that her grief over the man's demise was really not poignant.

"But you must stay the night," pleaded Mrs. Paradise.

"Thank you so much. I am sorry; it is impossible." Charmian's tone showed she was not open to persuasion.

"I have called for my husband," she said with a distant smile.

Mrs. Paradise cast up her eyes.

"Poor Thomas was prostrated," she hastened to explain. "The news horrified him."

"Yes, of course." Charmian quite understood. "I have the motor waiting."

"*But*, the poor dear is in bed," wailed Mrs. Paradise. "The shock, you know; it was really too much for him."

"Ah, then I shan't disturb him," said Charmian. "He is probably asleep by now."

"I do hope so," cried Mrs. Paradise. "I believe he has drunk too much in the last three days just because he couldn't bear to think of *this*."

Charmian did not attempt to keep the topic going. "You will tell him, won't you please—if he wakes—that I have gone home. There is a great deal to be done, you see."

"Oh, I know." Mrs. Paradise could find something in her past to meet any emergency. "I once ran over a man in my motor. It was so tragic—he died,

of course. Yes, there are many things one feels it one's duty to see about."

Charmian submitted to a maternal kiss and retreated with all speed.

The vast, silent rooms of the Trevena house were distinctly soothing after the rococo Paradise interior. Charmian was very tired; in her own bed at last, she was soon fast asleep. Trevena's absence was a relief; she did not want to see him. Her dreams were haunted by the vision of the man in the hospital cot and by the contrasting picture of her husband, lying on his back, insolent and flushed.

Trevena showed up at noon; Charmian had not expected him before luncheon time. He was pale and obviously wretched. The coolness of her greeting was not lost on him. He did not attempt to take her into his arms. She sat, very stiff, in a chair by the library window; uneasy at her calm scrutiny, he paced up and down.

"I swear, Charmian, it fairly finished me," he urged. "I know anybody but an ass would have seen how things were goin'; I was a fool. And when they told me, I was all played out; I was drunk, of course — I admit it. When a chap's like that, he don't pull himself together, y'know. I didn't realize it all till this mornin'. I wouldn't have let them get me to bed—and all that—if I'd been able to help myself. I tell you, Charmian, I could have cut my throat this mornin'. You havin' to go through all those dirty arrangements last night! No wonder you hold it against me; I don't expect anything else."

"Why should *I* have anything to hold against you?" Charmian wanted to know. "I've got quite as much to be sorry for as you. I acted like a *fool* at the bazaar—didn't I? I was having as good a time as the rest. We are all to blame—that's the point."

Trevena dropped into a chair; confused, he ran a hand through his hair, then pressed the fingers tight over his closed lids.

"Don't talk about bein' to blame yourself," he scoffed. "That's rot. Because a man's on the loose and kills another man, his wife's not at fault, y'know."

He opened his eyes and looked at her with intensity.

"Besides, you don't mean it," he said abruptly. "You sit there and talk and all the time you're condemnin' me. Well, that's right; I don't ask to be excused. Only come out with it; be honest. It'll do me no good if you talk truck like that. I know what I've done; you *ought* to light out at me. Go ahead. I can stand it. But afterwards—well, I know you'll see how it is; and I *need* your sympathy, Charmian. But if you keep up this high-and-mighty self-accusation and this martyred air, I won't listen. It's hypocritical and unfair, that's what it is. You'll never help me that way; and you want to help me—you *must* want to help me."

The clumsy pleading had a boyish note of helplessness. He leaned forward, eager and passionately contrite. Charmian caught in his blundering words the justifiable complaint he voiced. The attitude of cold aloofness she had adopted would make for bitter misunderstanding; better the flare of hot anger and the true reconciliation that would follow.

Charmian, with steady eyes, contemplated her husband for a moment. His tremulous expectancy awoke the pity in her and the longing to protect. There was no flicker of anger left.

Charmian, on her knees beside Trevena's chair, drew his hot face down and covered it with kisses. Feeling his arms about her, she burst into happy tears.

The next day brought back much of the old free-and-easy companionship. The morning was hot and the Trevenas early sought the cool waters of their secluded beach. Tommy, exulting in his swarthy nakedness, frolicked in the waves to his heart's content, swimming far out at top speed, plunging off the float with all the fantastic and distorted convolutions of the "fancy" diver, and whipping up geysers of foam from

sheer exuberance of spirits. His shouts were infantile, gleeful.

Charmian responded in a quiet, off-hand fashion. One would have said their merriment had all its former zest. For that matter, Trevena's had. Charmian, on the other hand, felt a restraint upon her. She could not help fearing that her husband had, with characteristic carelessness, quite forgotten the mishap of three days ago.

After luncheon Trevena exclaimed:

"I say, how about a motor-boat run?"

"I'm afraid it will be too late, after the funeral." Charmian watched him narrowly as she spoke.

He caught himself up with a quick flush.

Then,

"Do y'think so?" he asked. "A couple of hours before dinner, y'know. We can make it, I'm sure."

It was obvious that he *had* forgotten.

Charmian sighed.

"A couple of hours before dinner? Perhaps," she said.

CHAPTER IX

When the Trevenas opened their New York house late in November, they had entered upon a new phase of their married life. The autumn months on Long Island had wrought the change. The morning swims had been abandoned in September; and Charmian's eager interest in the stables had died out abruptly after the Piping Rock catastrophe. Charmian had learned that by her speedy forgiveness she had played into her husband's hands. He had glimpsed her dependence on him. The death of the injured man had after all grieved him only in so far as it alienated Charmian from him.

With her sudden veer to unreasoning tenderness had come the knowledge of the power he possessed. The old understanding as of equals had disappeared. The days no longer went with a rush; rather, they took on a monotonous hue. Trevena grew restless. Charmian, finding it impossible to fill the hours with new interests that should satisfy her husband, became unhappy. Petty irritations sprang up. Each knew the other bored and was resentful. Even at breakfast conversation had a feeble tentativeness.

Then, with the hue and cry of the hunting season filling the clear air, things brightened of a sudden. Early in October, the Trevenas accepted an invitation to a promiscuous house-party. Charmian, who had been trained to consider such gatherings vulgar, yet responded without hesitation to the project.

After that, time once more sped headlong under the brilliant fall skies. All Long Island seemed to spend the days on horseback. The brightstained trees resounded with shouts and the yelping of packs drunk with blood. Gun-shots from the deepest hollows gave evidence that each solitude was peopled. Scarlet coats flashed on all sides, like the plumage of some new species of bird that had migrated to the autumnal woods. Crowds of weary hunters could be seen at nightfall entering every house on the Island. It was a season of hilarity and good-fellowship. The air, already with the nip of frost in it, was stinging everybody to an exuberant activity.

October and November found the Trevenas in the midst of the throng that trooped from one woodland stretch to the next, from one blazing hearth to another. Informality and jollity reigned. The England of Robin Hood's time is born again each year with the first chilly days of October. The Lincoln green has turned to scarlet, that is all. The hunting-horn sounds its clarion note from hill and valley. Estates keep open house; hospitality knows no limit.

The Trevenas became definitely identified during those weeks with the hunting set. The "horsy" crowd that Mrs. Montague abhorred found a place in the noisy, boisterous throng; for the most part, however, the house-parties were made up of a better sort. The people were often questionable, of course; still, they were usually good

stock, no matter how much run to seed. They were the fast element that yet is still received by the conservatives at big affairs; most of them were not very distantly related to the reactionaries. The Woodcocks, for example, were typical: Mrs. Woodcock's father was a diplomat of note, a man who stood for the best, whose elder daughter was the wife of an English duke; Woodcock himself boasted parents of intolerable aristocracy. And yet this couple of high lineage afforded the newspapers lively headlines; they were notorious. So it went; and so the Trevenas were in short order classed.

Charmian soon had put all scruples to rest. She had an unconscionably good time. The long, bracing rides over the hard ground, the fleet progress across fields and ditches and high fences exhilarated her. The gay dinners were delightful. There was a thrill of adventure in playing cards for high stakes; winning money, losing money—it did not matter, the sport was capital. The people she met might not be unfailingly estimable, but they could at least be counted on to furnish amusement. Even the fact that Trevena drank more and more as the autumn advanced failed to worry Charmian as it should have; for all the other men imbibed to the top of their bent and were none the worse for it.

The week before the Trevenas' New York season began, Charmian paid her mother a visit. The Montagues had always made a point of spending a peaceful October and November at Newport.

In previous years, Charmian had loved the brief respite from social activity; on this occasion, however, she was uneasy at the end of two days. Perhaps the constant exhortations and lectures her mother saw fit to administer had something to do with this altogether unprecedented discontent.

Whatever the cause, Charmian was bored. The days seemed endless, the formal dinners depressing. She longed for her husband; never had she known such loneliness and homesickness. Try as she might, Charmian could not conceal her unrest.

Mrs. Montague and Irene were quick to perceive the change and were at no pains to hide how much they were hurt; Mr. Montague, when he was approached on the subject, staunchly refused to believe such tommyrot.

Poor Charmian protested again and again that she was enjoying the rest, that she would like to stay on indefinitely. The other women were by no means hoodwinked. Charmian, in the desperate effort to restrain the annoyance the situation inspired, smoked so many cigarettes that she became a scandal to the entire household.

"No girl should have more than five cigarettes a day," scolded Mrs. Montague. "Excess of any sort is deplorable."

"Everybody says Gwen Harcourt takes drugs, just because she smokes all the time," supplied Irene.

"Well, how do you know *I* don't?" snapped Charmian and burst into angry tears.

The day Charmian left for New York, she was utterly miserable. All the old love for her people flooded her heart. By a strange perversity, she thought of New York and her husband with dread; she wanted to stay where she was, to win her parents and Irene back to their former unwavering allegiance. The old talks they had had years before after Agatha's marriage came back to her.

"People say things are never the same when a girl's married—certainly Agatha has changed; but I will *always* be the same," Charmian had often asserted.

She looked now with tragic eyes at her mother and glimpsed the pain beneath the older woman's pompous hostility.

"Mother dear, forgive me, forgive me!" cried Charmian and tumbled into Mrs. Montague's arms. "I have been horrid this week—I don't know why. I'll never be like this again."

That caused everybody to relent. The day progressed smoothly and brightly. Charmian's wretchedness melted into

thin air; she waxed merry at the prospect of New York and Trevena.

The whole family saw her off at the Wickford Boat. A protracted embrace over, Mrs. Montague felt a polemical stir within her.

"Charmian dear," she said, enormous and sententious, "remember, you must spend all your time, before we get back to town, eradicating these people you have been running about with. A man must expect, when he marries, to have his wife choose his friends for him; a woman who neglects old bonds and takes up with her husband's undesirable companions establishes a fatal precedent."

She had dealt the newly established understanding a death blow.

"You're forgetting that I go with these people for just *one* reason," said Charmian. "That is, because I like them. Thomas has nothing to do with it. He doesn't force anybody on me—he is too kind."

Her eyes were blinded with tears that were the fruit of bewildered unhappiness.

Once in Trevena's arms, Charmian was content. She gazed deep in his kind eyes, stroked his expansive forehead and sighed.

"How I have missed you!" she murmured. "I have been miserable without you. Has the poor head ached?"

"Not a bit," he assured her.

"Ah, I am so glad. I've thought of you suffering, with nobody to soothe the pain away."

In her room, Charmian slipped off her travelling clothes and put on a dressing-gown.

Trevena watched with adoration the competent way in which she coiled her hair into a loose, sculpturesque knot.

"I sent Anne to bed," she explained. "The poor thing is always car-sick."

"How are your people?" Trevena liked this reunion gossip.

Charmian had risen from the dressing-table. She hesitated for a moment, then, feeling a tide of resentment within her, she said:

"They are not the same. Somehow, they have changed. Dear, I am *alone* in the world—except for you. You are all I have."

He caught her in his arms. "And you are all I have; you are all I want, all I need in the world."

Charmian smiled.

"You are all *I* need," she echoed.

CHAPTER X

THE winter progressed smoothly enough. The Trevenas joined forces with their friends of the hunting season and went at top speed. Charmian, in a month's time, had found herself a true member of the restless band. The activities communicated something of the elation and excitement that she had felt so often when managing her husband's horses. She responded with ardour to the gaiety; any cessation or lull irked.

Charmian gained in assurance during this period. All her timidity departed and she acquired much of the cool, wise self-reliance of the other women.

Trevena was still for his wife an all-sorbing study. She loved him with a new intensity and she grew to understand him. His drinking had become a habit; he was seldom intoxicated now and never quite sober.

Charmian saw at last the indisputable failure of her married life. Trevena was faithful to her, would probably remain so; but she had come to stand in his eyes for a woman whose standards were his own. Instead of lifting him clear of the old associations, she had showed a zest for the questionable.

Charmian, if the truth be told, had been but too obviously adaptable. Marriage had not meant a cutting away from the past; it had resolved itself into a neophyte's training on the time-worn lines. Charmian knew this. She resented the rough-and-tumble treatment her husband often indulged in; but, before she had been roused to anger, it was too late to mend matters. She could only accept things as they stood and weep miserably in secret.

Trevena and Willoughby Hewlett were inseparable. Willoughby, rosy

and ridiculous as ever, amused Charmian; he had this winter a new pose with women—an air of guileless innocence. He even called himself "the silly sheep."

Charmian, misled once into believing him serious, talked to him of her husband and openly acknowledged her uneasiness. Willoughby, his radiant smile in check, listened with perfect earnestness and offered dignified condolence. That very night he and Trevena positively raised the roof at somebody's dance.

From John Fenwick alone did Charmian gain real sympathy. Trevena's upright, estimable cousin was, of course, never on hand for the gay parties of the winter; but he made a point of dropping in to tea whenever Charmian would receive him alone. He treated her with chivalrous respect; he pitied her and would not believe that she was happy in this new set she went about with.

Fenwick adored Charmian. He did not take it upon himself to lecture or scold; he simply sat in her drawing-room and let her talk to him. These brief sessions soothed her. They were not mere boring intervals between frolics. They were occasions where she could pour out her troubles and discuss her husband with the only other person in the world who loved and understood him.

Nothing of especial import occurred during the winter or spring. The season in New York ran its breathless course; then, during Lent, activities were transferred to Palm Beach. June found the Trevenas where they had been in December, so far as their relation to each other was concerned.

The irreparable break occurred in the summer. It did not come about in the conventional way; Tommy was guilty of no intrigue. The Trevenas were at the Long Island estate once more. Charmian was to have a child early in September; throughout July and August she was ill and unhappy. The unwonted quiet acted as a goad to her nerves; the exaggerated solicitude of everybody was infuriating. She had never known sickness before. Her condition bewildered her.

The estate adjoining Trevena's was open that summer; the Leverings occupied it after a three years' absence abroad. Mrs. Levering was the Phyllis Parker of Trevena's youth. She was charming and fragile, with something of the brightness of a canary on a swinging perch. Her delicacy was instantly apparent to an observer; she herself, however, did her utmost to conceal the fact that she was not well. Her costumes were always diaphanous and gaily coloured, like a rosy mist.

Willoughby Hewlett struck it to perfection when he characterized her thus: "Look at the dear prig and you're wafted straight to Japan in cherry-blossom season." Phyllis refused to wear anything but chiffons that would catch the tints of dawn or crêpes that would seem a suffusion of young bloom. Above these wondrous clouds, her face lost much of its natural wanness. Her hat was sure to be big and very limp and of the deepest pink. Only her gaiety and her husband's love and her clothes kept Phyllis alive, people said.

She did not let a day go by without running in on Charmian. She would sit for hours in the dim drawing-room and chatter like an irrepressible child; then, of a sudden, would come a droop of weariness and, after a kiss and a merry, tired laugh, she would be gone.

Phyllis was not clever but her babble was unquenchably refreshing. There was an elfin beauty about her, too, an ethereal radiance ever and again glowing through her pallor. She was "incandescent"—thus Willoughby again—"a fairy bulb that flashes on and off while you watch." Other women suffered by juxtaposition with her. Charmian often confessed to herself that she felt like a swarthy savage beside the unearthly creature.

Charmian had a desperate fondness for Phyllis, and yet these lively visits held the most trying moments of the summer. Trevena, drawn from remote corners of the estate by the sound of

rippling laughter, always put in a sheepish appearance. Phyllis was at once cordial and distant with him. Directly he had entered the room, she would for a moment become shy, incoherent, as if he had thrown an impeding stone into the tenuous stream of her conversation; then, the barrier overcome, the sparkling flow would go on again smoothly.

Trevena would sit in charmed silence until she had gone; then, a bit apologetic, he would become extravagantly attentive to Charmian.

Phyllis purposely kept to topics that would be of interest to Charmian alone. "Charmian dear, I shall bring my sister and her babies to see you, when they arrive. They are exquisite little things, the babies. Robert is a ruffian, dirty and all the rest of it. He spends his time hunting fat worms and rushing with the finest specimens into the drawing-room. He usually gets scared at unfortunate moments and drops them into Louis Quinze chairs or tea-caddies. You see, I warn you now what to expect. The little girl is very dainty; she becomes hysterical at sight of Robert's big game. They are a problem, of course. It gets a bit tedious after the third or fourth worm has been dropped."

Phyllis chattered on like this and Charmian would bite her lip in anger to see Trevena's breathless interest.

All the man's former worship had returned in a flood. Phyllis, ineffably lovely and exalted, inspired the votary's awe. Charmian saw herself for what she was—the misshapen vessel, not any better after all than the women that had been in Trevena's life before; she knew now what she had forfeited in her marriage. Her husband, silent and abased before Phyllis, was unable to keep from his face the hopeless ecstasy of the sinner prostrate beneath the shrine of his adoration. Charmian's dull misery was complete.

In August the Leverings hastened to Arizona. Phyllis had failed steadily during the summer. Trevena, saddened and tormented by worry, strove to ease his fears by communicating them to Charmian. Then her jealousy flared. There was a bitter scene. From that moment she kept herself icily aloof.

The crisis came without warning.

Charmian, one morning late in August, was moving slowly towards the library, when a stab of pain went through her. She reached the library door. Trevena was sitting near the window, a newspaper in his hand. Charmian struggled to cry out. It seemed to her that she had screamed; in reality she had not uttered a sound.

Then, through the chill mist closing in on her, she saw that her husband was sobbing, his mouth stretched taut, his face at once hideous and grotesque under the goad of grief. In a flash Charmian knew Phyllis had died.

As she crouched in the doorway, Trevena got up. She thought he looked straight at her; then he turned his back and strode out of the room on to the terrace.

Charmian moaned low her tragic disillusion. Had he not heard her cry of anguish? Had he not seen the suffering in her face? She swayed and fell.

Late that night, Trevena returned home, mud-stained and very drunk. He was informed at the door that his wife's baby had been born and had lived but three hours.

CHAPTER XI

CHARMIAN never forgave her husband, never for an instant believed that he had failed to see her crouching in the doorway. For two years she continued to live with him. There were many reconciliations of a perfunctory sort; a second child was born to them; but in the end their life together became unbearable. Trevena, sick of his wife at last, broke away. With Hewlett he went in for spectacular dissipation; but, unlike his disreputable friend, he made no attempt to keep his head bobbing serenely above the bright billows. Poor Trevena was quite submerged, while Willoughby still made his shining countenance necessary to society.

Rumours of divorce were of course

persistent. The fact that the Trevenas lived apart seemed sufficient justification for the conjecture. Every move of Charmian's was supposed to be on the advice of some lawyer. If she settled in a place for a month or two people talked of her establishing a residence.

As a matter of fact, Charmian was occupied merely with extravagant entertaining and with the care of her baby son. Unhappy she was and bitterly hostile to her husband; but somehow she could not bring herself to the point of breaking the link that bound her legally to Trevena.

She knew that he was out of her life irrevocably; and yet, with a perverse, undying love for him in her heart, she clung to the unmeaning tie of marriage. Thomas Trevena, Jr., was the one radiant thing Charmian had left. Social activities afforded her restlessness full play; she soon found that she could not give them up.

When little Tommy had reached the dignified age of three, Charmian took to inspecting exclusive schools. This pursuit brought her to Newport one September; St. George's was there to be reckoned with. At the Muenchinger-King, the windows of the Trevena suite gave a view of the Reading Room veranda across the way. Charmian knew that her husband had a house in Newport; she was sure he would show up at the Reading Room before the morning was over. Two hours she spent in savage self-accusation and irresolution; at last she gave in and, drawing a chair into a secluded spot where she could watch the scene on the porch opposite, she sat down and waited.

She was not disappointed. Trevena drove up in a motor and joined the lazily convivial crew. His hearty laugh floated up to his wife from time to time. He was as handsome as ever and quite unchanged. Charmian, examining him in miserable solitude, saw at once that his head was aching. Unperceived by his companions, he would throw back his head and press hard on his closed lids.

Charmian's eyes blinked through a mist of tears. She turned away, furious with herself. Ten minutes later she came stealthily back to the window. Trevena had gone.

In the afternoon, St. George's was viewed from top to bottom with a critical eye. Willoughby Hewlett, dropping in at the Muenchinger-King after luncheon, had consented to look the school over with Charmian.

"If *I* approve of the place, it won't be fit for the child," he had warned. "Another thing, I refuse to join you if there are nurses along."

Charmian reassured him. "I am quite alone. The baby and his retinue are safe in New York."

The visit of inspection over, Charmian and Hewlett, chatting and arguing gaily, sped back along Purgatory Road. Near the boundary of Easton's Beach, another automobile, evidently returning from the Clambake Club, shot past them; Trevena was alone in the machine. He glanced back over his shoulder and recognized his wife. Drunk, confused, and at the same time stung to frenzy by the maddening throb of his head, he put up a hand to his eyes. Fifty feet ahead, a wooden bridge spanned a creek. Trevena, giving way to momentary bewilderment, had lost control of himself; he sent the motor forward, with a leap, into a dizzying speed. Clouds of dust eddied about him; the engine snorted out its fierce power.

Straight for the bridge Trevena made; then, apparently blind and panic-stricken, with a savage twist of the wheel he wrenched the machine out of its course. Just as it reached the rattling planks, the automobile swung around, and, skidding crazily, plunged at the flimsy rail to one side of the bridge. There came the dull thud of the impact, the sharp crack of splintering wood and the big car toppled, reared and crashed over the edge. A spurt of water shot high into the air. A mad whirring of wheels sounded. A plank from the rail fell with a faint slap into the water.

Charmian sat still, paralysed and

shuddering. The chauffeur had brought her motor to a stop. Hewlett, unseen by her, had leaped from his place and rushed down the road through the swirling dust-clouds.

Screaming out incoherent entreaties, he had stumbled after Trevena.

Now, mute with horror, his body sagging, he stared at the shattered bridge-rail, then back to Charmian. She caught on his white face a dazed grief.

A hand to her throat, Charmian fell forward.

CHAPTER XII

CHARMIAN'S period of mourning rather amused people; but, after all, when one thought of it dispassionately one couldn't help approving. The conventional thing could not, in this case, be avoided. There had been no divorce; there was the child to be considered, too; and, most cogent of reasons, Mrs. Trevena's widow's-weeds were very becoming. Crêpe afforded a perfect background for her black eyes, her clear pallor and her amazingly red lips.

Charmian, at Trevena's death, had put her affairs into the hands of John Fenwick. For two months she had been ill; a nervous collapse, it was politely called. As a matter of fact, it was complete prostration.

Through the weeks, she was haunted not by the remembrance of the crash itself, but by the vision of Trevena with a hand to his eyes. It was that little familiar gesture that called up all her old-time pity and solicitude and brought the keen pang of tender association. In her delirium she was always murmuring consolation and pressing her slender hands to her husband's forehead.

With recovery had returned the former restlessness; grief-stricken though she was, Charmian longed for social activity once more. Her son, at the very noisiest age, was too energetic for comfort; nobody's nerves could stand a protracted session with him.

Charmian found that travel alone satisfied her. Leaving Tommy behind, she spent two years in skimming over the surface of the earth. No place held her for long. She simply wandered about aimlessly and exhausted the servants she carried about with her.

"It's two years now since I've got my breath," complained Annie, the maid.

At last, Charmian left off her mourning; with the resumption of colourful gowns, the nomadic career ended. She came back to New York and to Society. In short order, she had made herself a leader of the gayest set to be found. Her dinners and dances got tremendous headlines in the papers; the Montagues, long since hostile, threw up their hands at such unheard-of vulgarity.

John Fenwick, neglecting everything else in his determined effort to increase the Trevena estate, had a feverish time of it; Charmian's extravagance would have drained almost any exchequer.

Still John continued patient; the remonstrances he made were gentle. His adoration of Charmian had waxed with the years; even now he could not believe that she gained any happiness from her spectacular career. She *must* crave rest, the haven of peace—of that he was sure.

Fenwick saw less and less of her as time went on. Even on occasions of business it was hard to pin her down for more than a hasty interview. Tea with her alone became increasingly difficult of achievement. Willoughby Hewlett, the buffoon par excellence of New York, kept at her side. Fenwick could not help liking the dissipated, good-looking Hewlett, with his endless chatter and his rosy insouciance; but the proximity of the wag to Charmian pained him. She was too fine to be followed about by such scamps, he told himself again and again.

Fenwick's health broke down during Charmian's second season in New York. Three months abroad the doctors ordered; and John, after intense deliberation, gave in to the command. He realized that he owed it to Charmian's fortune to keep fit and alert.

He had tea with her the day before he sailed.

"I have two long hours free," she confided to him.

Charmian, slimmer than ever and with a new note of abrupt decisiveness in her voice, gave Fenwick a cordial smile as she sat at the tea-table.

"John, you are a wonderful creature," she told him. "I am so terribly selfish; it's nothing in the world but my silly extravagance that has pulled you down. I promise you this—from now on I am going to be more careful. I owe it to you."

"By no means," he protested. "It isn't that. It isn't the management of your affairs, Charmian—" He caught himself up.

Charmian was silent for a moment.

"What *is* the matter then?" she asked at last. Her eyes had grown tender.

John, overwhelmed by hopeless longing, by loneliness, plunged.

"Ah, Charmian, it is you. I love you; I can't be happy until I've got you out of this frivolity. I need you for my own. Can't you see that you aren't meant for this, that you are meant for something—better?"

There was, despite the words, no egotism in what he said.

Charmian echoed his earnestness.

"No, no," she answered him, "you don't understand. You are too good for me; I shouldn't be satisfied with anything but this. It requires a person of intelligence—your life of peace. I could never learn to be content away from a crowd."

He shook his head.

"That isn't true," he contradicted. "I have studied you and I *know*."

Charmian brightened of a sudden.

"It may be so," she said. "After all, I have never tried."

She leaned towards him. "Let me think it over these three months. When you come back I shall be able to tell you my decision; I will thresh it all out. Somehow, I *hope* you are right; there is nobody in the world so fine as you. Ah, if only you are right!"

She dropped the discussion there.

For an hour they talked. Once, after a pause of some length, Charmian left the room for a moment. Returning she gave the man a long glance of guilty tenderness.

Fenwick, serious and thoughtful, felt Charmian must prefer this quiet relaxation to the incessant babble of Hewlett and the other fops.

A footman entered. "The hairdresser, Madame!"

Charmian rose with a murmured apology.

"Oh, I am so sorry," she exclaimed. "I had forgotten the wretch. And we have had only an hour's talk!"

Fenwick, departing, gazed with hopeful timidity into her eyes.

"Remember!" he urged. "Three months to think it over."

"Three months!" she assured.

When he had gone, she paced up and down the room impatiently.

Catching her reflection in a mirror, she paused.

"You fool! You worthless fool!" she said aloud, and with bitterness, to her image.

CHAPTER XIII

FENWICK returned to New York in a sanguine frame of mind; on the way from the steamer to his rooms, he stopped in at the Union Club. Geoffrey Carter, by a lucky chance, was there.

Fenwick, after a very brief preliminary chat, asked tidings of Charmian.

"Oh, good Lord, haven't you heard?" Carter exclaimed. "She's taken Willoughby Hewlett unto herself—for better or worse, till death do them part and all the rest of it. It's the joke of New York. The thing should have come off last Wednesday, but Willoughby was too drunk to move; on Thursday he couldn't even be *found*. He showed up again, pink as you please, on Friday and they got the ceremony off their minds at noon. Charmian's an idiot."

As Fenwick turned away, Carter delivered a parting shot:

"You'll certainly have your hands full now, John, furnishing Charmian with funds. She and Willoughby are going in for exhibiting horses—an expensive hobby, that. I *don't* envy you."

SANCTUARY

By Theodore Dreiser

I

PRIMARILY, there were the conditions under which she was brought to fifteen years of age: the crowded, scummy tenements; the narrow green-painted halls with their dim gas-jets, making the entrance look more like that of a morgue than a dwelling-place; the dirty halls and rooms with their green or blue or brown walls painted to save the cost of paper; the bare wooden floors, long since saturated with every type of grease and filth from oleomargarine and suet leaked from cheap fats or meats, to beer and whisky and tobacco-juice. A little occasional scrubbing by some would-be hygienic tenant was presumed to keep or make clean some of the chambers and halls wherein they lived.

And then the streets outside—any of the streets by which she had ever been surrounded—block upon block of other red, bare, commonplace tenements crowded to the doors with human life, the space before them sped over by noisy, grassy trucks and vehicles of all kinds, generally carrying filth. Streets stifling in summer, dusty and icy in winter; decorated on occasion by stray cats and dogs, dead or alive, pawing in ashcans, watched over by lordly policemen, and always running with people, people, people—who made their living heaven only knows how, and existed in such a manner as their surroundings suggested.

In this atmosphere were always longshoremen, wagon-drivers, sweepers of floors, washers of dishes, waiters, janitors, workers in laundries, factories—mostly in indifferent or decadent or despairing conditions. And all of these people existed, in so far as she ever knew, upon that mysterious, evanescent and fluctuating something known as the weekly wage.

Always about her there had been drunkenness, fighting, complaining, sickness or death; the police coming in and arresting one and another; the gas man, the rent man, the furniture man, hammering at doors for their due—and not getting it—in due time the undertaker also arriving amid a great clamour, as though lives were the most precious things imaginable.

It is entirely conceivable that in viewing or in meditating upon an atmosphere such as this, one might conclude that no good could come out of it. What! a dung-heap grow a flower? Exactly, and often, a flower—not to grow to any glorious maturity probably, but nevertheless a flower of the spirit at least might have its beginnings there. And if it shrank or withered in the miasmatic atmosphere—well, conceivably, that might be normal, although in reality all flowers thus embedded in infancy do not so wither. There are flowers and flowers.

Viewing Madeleine Kinsella at the ages of five, seven, eleven and thirteen even, it might have been conceded that she was a flower of sorts—admittedly not a brave, lustrous one of the orchid or gardenia persuasion, but a flower nevertheless. Her charm was of a simpler character, more retiring, less vivid than is usually accorded the compliment of beauty. She was never rosy, never colourful in the high sense, never daring or aggressive. Always, from her infancy up, she seemed to herself

and others to be slipping about the corners and out-of-the-way places of life, avoiding it, staring at it with wide, lamblike eyes, wondering at things, often fearfully.

Her face, always delicately oval and pale, was not of the force which attracted. Her eyes, a milkish blue-grey with a suggestion of black in the iris, her hair black, her hands long-fingered and slim, were not of a type which would appeal to the raw youth of her world. Unconsciously, and ever, her slender, longish body sank into graceful poses. Beside the hard, garish, colourful, strident types of her neighbourhoods—the girls whom the boys liked—she was not so much so, not even fascinating, and yet, contemplated at odd moments as she grew, she was appealing enough, at times beautiful.

What most affected her youth and her life was the internal condition of her family, the poverty and general worthlessness of her parents. They were as poor as their poorest neighbours, and quarrelsome, unhappy and mean-spirited into the bargain.

Her father, for instance, came dimly into her understanding at somewhere near her seventh or eighth year as an undersized, contentious and drunken and wordy man, always more or less out of a job, irritated with her mother and her sister and brother, and always, as her mother seemed to think, a little the worse for drink.

"You're a liar! You're a liar! You're a liar! You're a liar!"—how well she remembered this sing-song echoing reiteration of his, in whatever basement or hole they were living at the time!

Her mother, often partially intoxicated or morose because of her own ills, was only too willing to rejoin in kind. Her elder sister and brother, much more agreeable in their way and as much put upon as herself, were always coming in or running out somewhere and staying while the storm lasted; while she, shy and always a little frightened, seemed to look upon it all as unavoidable, possibly even essential. The world was always so stern, so mysterious, so non-understandable to Madeleine.

Again it might be, and often was, "Here, you, you brat, go an' get me a can o' beer! Gwan, now!" which she did quickly and fearfully enough, running to the nearest wretched corner saloon with the "can" or "growler," her slim little fingers closed tightly over the five-cent piece or dime entrusted to her, her eyes taking in the wonders and joys of the street even as she ran. She was so small at the time that her little arms were unable to reach quite to the level of the bar, and she had to accept the aid of the bartender or some drinker. Then she would patiently wait while one of them teased her as to her size and until the beer was handed down.

Once, and once only, three "bad boys," knowing what she was going for and how wretched and shabby was old Kinsella, not able to revenge himself on anyone outside his family, had seized her en route, forced open her hand and ran away with the dime, leaving her to return fearsomely to her father rubbing her eyes, and to be struck and abused soundly and told to fight—"Blank-blank you, what the blank 're you good for if you can't do that?"

Only the vile language and the defensive soberness of her mother at the time saved her from a worse fate. As for the boys who had stolen the money, they only received curses and awful imprecations, which harmed no one.

Wretched variations of this same existence were endured by the other two members of the family, her brother Frank and her sister Tina.

The former was a slim and nervous youth, given to fits of savage temper like his father and not to be ordered and controlled exactly as his father would have him. At times, as Madeleine recalled, he appeared terribly resentful of the conditions that surrounded him and cursed and swore and even threatened to leave; at other times he was placid enough, at least not inclined to share the dreadful scenes which no one could avoid where her father was.

At the age of twelve or thirteen he secured work in a box-factory somewhere and for a while brought his wages home. But often there was no breakfast or dinner for him, and when his father or mother were deep in their cups or quarrelling, things were so generally neglected that even where home ties were strong no one of any worldly experience could have endured them, and he ran away.

His mother was always complaining of "the lumbago" and of not being able to get up, even when he and Tina were working and bringing home a portion of their weekly wage or all of it. If she did, it was only to hover over the wretched cookstove and brew herself a little tea and complain as before.

Madeleine had early, in her ignorant and fearsome way, tried to help, but she did not always know how and her mother was either too ill or too disgruntled with life to permit her to assist, had she been able.

As it had been with Frank so it was with Tina, only it came sooner.

When Madeleine was only five Tina was a grown girl of ten, with yellow hair and a pretty, often smiling face, and was already working somewhere—in a candy store—for a dollar and a half a week. Later, when Madeleine was eight and Tina thirteen, the latter had graduated to a button-works and was earning three.

There was something rather admirable and yet disturbing connected dimly with Tina in Madeleine's mind, an atmosphere of rebelliousness and courage which she had never possessed and which she could not have described, lacking as she did a mind that registered the facts of life clearly. She only saw Tina, pretty and strong, coming and going from her ninth to her thirteenth year, refusing to go for beer at her father's order and being cursed for it, even struck at or thrown at by her father, sometimes by her mother, and often standing at the foot of the stairs after work hours or on a Sunday afternoon or evening, looking at the crowded street or walking up and down with other girls and boys, when her mother wanted her to be doing things in the house — sweeping, washing dishes, making beds — dreary, grey tasks all.

"Fixin' your hair again! Fixin' your hair again! Fixin' your hair again!" she could hear her father screaming whenever she paused before the one cracked mirror to arrange her hair. "Always in front of that blank-blank mirror fixin' her hair! If you don't get away from in front of it I'll throw you an' the mirror in the street! What're you always fixin' your hair for? Say? What're you always fixin' your hair for? Say! What? What? What're you always fixin' your hair for?"

But Tina was never cast down apparently, only silent. At times she sang and walked with an air. She dressed herself as attractively as possible, as if with the few things she had she was attempting to cast off the burden of the life by which she was surrounded. Always she was hiding things away from the others, never wanting them to touch anything of hers. And how she had hated her father as she grew, in bitter moments calling him a "sot" and a "fool."

Tina had never been very obedient, refusing to go to church or to do much of anything about the house. Whenever her father or mother were drinking or fighting she would slip away and stay with some girl in the neighbourhood that she knew. And in spite of all this squalor and misery and the fact that they moved often and the food was bad, Tina, once she was twelve or thirteen, always seemed able to achieve an agreeable appearance.

Madeleine often remembered her in a plaid skirt she had got somewhere, which looked beautiful on her, and a little gilt pin which she wore at her neck. And she had a way of doing her yellow hair high on her head, which had stuck in Madeleine's mind perhaps because of her father's rude comments on it.

II

It is not surprising that Madeleine came to her twelfth and thirteenth years without any real understanding of the great world about her and without any definite knowledge or skill. Her drunken mother was now more or less dependent upon her, her father having died of pneumonia and her brother and sister having disappeared to do for themselves.

Aside from petty beginners' tasks in shops or stores, or assisting her mother at washing or cleaning, there was little that she could do at first. Mrs. Kinsella, actually compelled by the need for rent or food or fuel after a time, would get occasional work in a laundry or kitchen or at scrubbing or window-cleaning, but not for long. The pleasure of drink would soon rob her of that.

At these tasks Madeleine helped until she secured work in a candy factory in her thirteenth year at the wage of three-thirty a week. But even with this little money paid in regularly there was no assurance that her mother would add sufficient to it to provide either food or warmth. Betimes, and when Madeleine was working, her mother cheered her all too obvious sorrows with the bottle, and at nights or week-ends rewarded Madeleine with a gabble which was all the more painful because no material comfort came with it.

The child actually went hungry at times. Usually, after a few drinks, her mother would begin to weep and recite her past ills: a process which reduced her timorous and very sympathetic daughter to complete misery. In sheer desperation the child sought for some new way in her own mind. A reduction in the working-force of the candy factory, putting her back in the ranks of the work-seekers once more, and a neighbour perceiving her wretched state and suggesting that some extra helpers were wanted in a department store at Christmastime, she applied there, but so wretched were her clothes by now that she was not even considered.

Then a man who had a restaurant in a nearby street gave her mother and Madeleine positions as dishwashers, but he was compelled to discharge her mother, although he wished to retain Madeleine. From this last, however, because of the new and frightening attentions of the cook, she had to flee, and without obtaining a part of the small pittance which was due her. Again, and because in times past she had aided her mother to clean in one place and another, she was able to get a place as servant in a family.

Those who know anything of the life of a domestic know how thoroughly unsatisfactory it is—the leanness, the lack of hope. As a domestic, wherever she was—and she obtained no superior places for the time being—she had only the kitchen for her chief chamber or a cubby-hole under the roof. Here, unless she was working elsewhere in the house or chose to visit her mother occasionally, she was expected to remain. Pots and pans and scrubbing and cleaning and bed-making were her world. If anyone aside from her mother ever wanted to see her (which was rare) he or she could only come into the kitchen, an ugly and by day inconvenient realm.

She had, as she soon came to see, no privileges whatsoever. In the morning she was expected to be up before anyone else, possibly after working late the night before. Breakfast had to be served for others before she herself could eat—what was left. Then came the sweeping and cleaning. In one place which she obtained in her fifteenth year the husband annoyed her so, when his wife was not looking, that she had to leave; in another it was the son. An old uncle boarding with one family frightening her by his importunities and his disagreeable self, drove her to leave it. By now she was becoming more attractive, although by no means beautiful or daring.

But wherever she was and whatever she was doing, she could not help think-

ing of her mother and Tina and Frank and her father, and of the grim necessities and errors and vices which had seemed to dominate them. Neither her brother nor her sister did she ever see again. Her mother, she felt (and this was due to a sensitiveness and a sympathy which she could not possibly overcome), she would have with her for the rest of her days unless, like the others, she chose to run away.

Daily her mother was growing more inadequate and less given to restraint or consideration. As "bad" as she was Madeleine could not help thinking what a "hard" time she had had. From whatever places she obtained work in these days (and it was not often any more) she was soon discharged, and then she would come inquiring after Madeleine, asking to be permitted to see her. Naturally, her shabby dress and shawl and rag of a hat, as well as her wastrel appearance, were an affront to any well-ordered household. Once in her presence, whenever Madeleine was permitted to see her, she would begin either a cozening or a lachrymose account of her great needs.

"It's out o' oil I am, me dear," or "Wurra, I have no wood" or "bread" or "meat"—never drink. "Ye won't let yer pore old mother go cold or hungry, now, will ye? That's the good girl now. Fifty cents now, if ye have it, me darlin', or a quarter, an' I'll not be troublin' ye soon again. Even a dime, if ye can spare me no more. God'll reward ye. I'll have work o' me own to-morra. That's the good girl now—ye won't let me go away without anything."

Oscillating between shame and sympathy, her daughter would take from the little she had and give it to her, tremulous for fear the disturbing figure would prove her undoing. Then the old woman would go out, lurching sometimes in her cups, and disappear, while an observant fellow-servant was probably seeing and reporting to the mistress, who, of course, did not want her to come there and so told the girl, or, more practical still, discharged her.

Thus from her fourteenth to her sixteenth year she was shunted from house to house and from shop to shop, always in the vain hope that this time her mother might let her alone.

And at the very same time, life, sweetened by the harmonies of youth in the blood, was calling—that exterior life which promised everything because so far it had given nothing. The little simple things of existence, the very ordinary necessities of clothing and ornament, with which the heart of youth and the inherent pride of appearance are gratified, had a value entirely disproportionate to their worth. Yes, already she had turned the age wherein the chemic harmonies in youth begin to sing, thought to thought, colour to colour, dream to dream. She was being touched by the promise of life itself.

And then, as was natural, love in the guise of youth, a rather sophisticated gallant somewhat above the world in which she was moving, appeared and paid his all but worthless court to her. He was physically charming, the son of a grocer of some means in the vicinity in which she was working, a handsome youth with pink cheeks and light hair and blue eyes, and vanity enough for ten. Because she was shy and yet pretty he became passingly interested in her.

"Oh, I saw you cleaning the windows yesterday," this with a radiant, winning smile; or "You must live down toward Blake Street. I see you going down that way once in a while."

Madeleine acknowledged rather shamefacedly that it was true. That so dashing a boy should be interested in her was too marvellous.

In the evenings, or at any time, it was easy for a youth of his skill and *savoir faire* to pick her out of the bobbing stream of humanity in which she occasionally did errands or visited her mother in her shabby room, and to suggest that he be permitted to call upon her. Or, failing that, because of her mother's shabby quarters and her mother herself, that the following Sunday would be ideal for an outing to one

of those tawdry, noisy beaches to which he liked to go with other boys and girls in a car.

A single trip to Wonderland, a single visit to one of its halls where music sounded in sight of the sea and where he did his best to teach her to dance, a single meal in one of its gaudy, noisy restaurants, a taste of its whirly pleasures, and a new colour and fillip were given to hope, a new and seemingly realizable dream of happiness implanted in her young mind. The world was happier than she had thought, or could be made so; not all people fought and screamed at each other. There were such things as tenderness, soft words, sweet words.

But the way of so sophisticated a youth with a maid was brief and direct. His mind was of that order which finds in the freshness of womankind a mere passing delight, something to be deflowered and then put aside. He was a part of a group that secured its happiness in rifling youth, the youth of those whose lives were so dull and bleak that a few words of kindness, a little change of scene, the mere proximity of experience and force such as they had never known, were pay ample for anything which they might give or do.

And of these Madeleine was one.

Never having had anything in her own life, the mere thought of a man so vigorous and handsome, one with knowledge enough to show her more of life than she had ever dreamed of, to take her to places of colour and light, to assure her that she was fitted for better things even though they were not immediately forthcoming, was sufficient to cause her to place faith where it was least worthy of being placed. To win his way there was even talk of marriage later on, that love should be generous and have faith—and then—

III

Plain-Clothesman Amundsen, patrolling like a hawk the region of Fourteenth and K streets, and not so far from Blake, where Madeleine had lived for a time, was becoming interested some time later in and slightly suspicious of a new face.

For several days, at odd hours, he had seen a girl half-slinking, half-brazening her way through a region the very atmosphere of which was blemishing to virtue. To be sure, he had not yet seen her speak to anyone; nor was there that in her glance or manner which caused him to feel that she might.

Still— With the assurance of his authority and his past skill in trapping many, he followed discreetly, seeing where she went, how she lingered for a while nervously, then returned as she had come. She was very young, not more than seventeen.

He adjusted his tie and collar and decided to attempt his skill.

"Excuse me, Miss. Out for a little stroll? So am I. Mind my walking along with you a little way? Wouldn't like to come and have a drink, would you? I work in an automobile place over here in Grey Street, and I'm just off for the afternoon. Live here in the neighbourhood?"

Madeleine surveyed this last stranger with troubled eyes. Since the day her youthful lover had deserted her, and after facing every conceivable type of ill, but never being willing to confess or fall back upon her drunken, dreaming mother for aid, she had tested every device. The necessities and expenses incident to a prospective, and to her degrading state, as well as the continued care of her mother, had compelled her, as she had finally seen it, to come to this —for a time anyhow. A street girl, finding her wandering and crying, had taken her in hand and shown her, after aiding her for weeks, how to make her way.

Her burden that she feared so much was artificially if ruthlessly and criminally disposed of. Then she was shown the way of the streets until she could gain a new foothold in life; only, as she had since learned, it was difficult for her to accommodate herself to this fell traffic. She was not of it spiritually. She really did not intend to

continue in it; it was just a temporary makeshift, born of fear and a dumb despair. So it was that Madeleine was in the public ways.

But neither Detective Amundsen nor the law was ready to believe that. To the former she seemed as worthless as any—one of those curious, uncared-for flowers never understood of the dull.

In a nearby café she had listened to his inquiries, the fact that he had a room in a nearby hotel, or could secure one. Contemning a fate which drove her to such favours, and fully resolved to leave it soon, to make something better of her life in the future, she went with him.

Then came the scarring realization that he was an officer of the law, a cynical, contemptuous hawk, smirking over her tears and her explanations. It was absolutely nothing to him that she was so young and could scarcely have been as hardened as he pretended. She was compelled to walk through the streets with him to the nearest police station, while he nodded to or stopped to explain to passing brothers of the cloth the nature of his latest conquest.

There was the registering of her under the false name that she chose, rather than be exposed under her true one, before a brusque and staring sergeant in shirtsleeves; a cell with a wooden bench, the first she had ever known; a matron who searched her; then a ride somewhere in a closed vehicle, and the usual swift and confusing arraignment before a judge whose glance was seemingly so cold that it was frightening.

"Nellie Fitzpatrick; Officer Amundsen, Eighth Precinct."

The friend who had taught her the ways of the streets had warned her that if caught and arrested it might mean months of incarceration in some institution, the processes or corrective meaning of which she did not quite comprehend. All that she had grasped fully was that it meant a severance from her freedom, the few little things, pitiful as they were, that she could call her own. And now here she was, in the clutches of the law, and with no one to defend her.

The testimony of the officer was as it had been in hundreds of cases before this; he had been walking his beat and she had accosted him, as usual.

There being no legal alternative, the magistrate had held her for sentence, pending investigation, and the investigation proving, as it only could, that her life would be better were some corrective measures applied to it, she was sent away. She had never had any training worthy the name. Her mother was an irresponsible inebriate. A few months in some institution where she could be taught some trade or craft would be best.

And so it was that for a period of a year she was turned over to the care of the Sisterhood of the Good Shepherd.

IV

THE grey and bony walls of that institution starkly dominated one of the barest and most unprepossessing regions of the city. Its northern façade fronted a stoneyard, beyond which were the rocks of the racing Sound and a lighthouse. To the east, rocks and the river, a grey expanse in winter picked over by gulls, mourned over by the horns of endless craft. To the south, bare coal-yards, wagon-yards, tenements.

Twice weekly, sentenced delinquents of various ages—the "children," of whom Madeleine was one; the "girls," ranging from eighteen to thirty; the "women," ranging from thirty to fifty; and the old people, ranging from fifty until the last years of life—were brought here in an all but air-tight cage, boxed like a great circus van, and with only small barred air-holes at the top. Inside the van were bare, hard benches, one against either wall. A representative of the probation and control system of the city, a gaunt female of many years, sat within; also an officer of such prodigious proportions that the mere sight of him might

well raise the inquiry of why so much unnecessary luggage. For amusement in dull hours he smoothed his broad mouth with the back of his red, hairy hand, and dreamed of bygone days.

The institution itself was operated by a Mother Superior and thirty nuns, all of the order mentioned, all expert in their separate ways in cooking, housekeeping, laundering, buying, lace-making, teaching, and a half dozen other practical or applied arts, useful in so varied a realm.

Within the institution were separate wings or sections for each of the four groups before mentioned, sections in which each had their separate working, eating, sleeping and playing rooms. Only one thing was shared in common: the daily, and often twice or thrice daily, religious ceremonies in the great chapel, a lofty, image-decorated and be-altared and candle-lit chamber, whose tall, thin spire surmounted with a cross might easily be seen from many of the chambers in which the different groups worked. There were masses in the mornings, vespers and late prayers in the afternoons, often late prayers at night or on holidays, when additional services of one kind and another were held. To the religious-minded these were of course consoling. To the contrary-minded they became at times a strain.

Always, and over all the work and all the routine relaxations or pleasures of the institution, there hung the grim insistence of the law, its executive arm, upon order, seemliness, and, if not penance, at least a servility of mind which was the equivalent thereof. Let the voices of the nuns be never so soft, their footfalls light, their manners courteous, their ways gentle, persuasive, sympathetic, their mood tender; back of it all lay the shadow of the force which could forthwith return any or all to the rough hands of the police, the stern and not-to-be-evaded dictum of the courts.

This, much more than any look of disappointment or displeasure, if such were ever necessary, spoke to these delinquents or victims, whatever their mood, and quieted them in their most rebellious hours. Try as they would, they could not but remember that it was the law that had placed them here and now detained them, whether they would or no. That there was peace, order, sweetness and harmony, was well enough, comforting in cases, only and always it had obviously a two-fold base: one in the power of the law itself, the other in the gentle, appealing, beautiful suasion of the nuns.

But to so inexperienced and as yet unreasoning a child as Madeleine all of it flavoured at this time of but one thing: the sharp, crude, inconsiderate and uninquiring forces of law or life, which seemed never to stop and inquire how or why, but only to order how, and that without mercy. Like some frightened animal faced by a terrifying enemy, she had thus far been able to think only of some darksome corner into which she might slip and hide, a hidden place so inconspicuous and minute that the great savage world without would not trouble or care to follow.

And well enough the majority of the Sisterhood, especially those in immediate authority over her, understood the probable direction and ramifications of her present thoughts.

They knew her mood, for had they not during years past dealt with many such? And stern as was the law, they were not unmindful of her welfare. So long as she was willing and obedient there was but one thing more: that somehow her troubled or resentful or congealed and probably cruelly injured mind should be wooed from its blind belief in the essential injustice of life, to be made to see, as they themselves were still ready to believe, that all paths were not closed, all forces essentially dark or evil.

For them there was hope of sorts for all, a way out, and many—even she—might find ways and means of facing life, better possibly than any she had ever known.

V

SISTER ST. AGNES, for instance, who controlled the spotlessly clean but barn-like and bleak room in which were a hundred machines for the sewing of shirtwaists, was a creature of none too fortunate a history herself.

Returning at the age of eighteen and at the death of her father from a convent in which she had been placed by him in order to escape the atmosphere of a home which he himself had found unsatisfactory, she had found a fashionable mother leading a life of which she could scarcely conceive, let alone accept. The taint, the subterfuge, the self-indulgent waste, had as soon sickened her as had the streets Madeleine.

Disappointed, she felt herself after a time incapable of enduring it and had fled, seeking first to make her way in a world which offered only meagre wages and a barren life to those incapable of enduring its rugged and often shameless devices; later, again wearied of her own trials, she had returned to the convent in which she had been trained and asked to be schooled for service there. Finding the life too simple for a nature grown more rugged, she had asked to be, and had been, transferred to the House of the Good Shepherd, finding for the first time, here in this institution, duties and opportunities which somehow matched her ideals.

And by the same token the Mother Superior of this same institution, Mother St. Bertha, who often came through and inquired into the stories of each one, was of a history and of an order of mind which was not unlike that of Sister St. Agnes, only it had even more of genuine pathos and suffering in it. The daughter of a shoe manufacturer, she had seen her father fail, her mother die of consumption, a favourite brother drink and carouse until he finally fell under the blight of disease and died. Before this, one of his flames, a pathetic figure, having been neglected by him and her family, in fear of exposure had committed suicide.

The subsequent death of her father, to whom she had devoted her years, and the failing of her own dreams of a personal love, had saddened her, and she sought out and was admitted to this order in the hope that she, too, might still make especial use of a life that promised all too little in the world outside.

Her great comfort was in having someone or something to love, the satisfaction of feeling that lives which otherwise might have come to nothing had by some service of hers been lifted to a better state. And in that thought she worked here daily, going about among those incarcerated in the different quarters, seeing to it that their tasks were not too severe, their comforts and hopes, where hope still remained, in nowise betrayed.

But to Madeleine, at first the solemn habits of the nuns, as well as the grey gingham apron she had to don, the greyer woollen dress, the severe manner in which she had to dress her hair, her very plain shoes, the fact that she had to rise at six-thirty, attend mass and then breakfast at eight, work from eight-thirty to twelve-thirty, and again from one-thirty to four; lunch regularly at twelve-thirty and sup at six, attend a form of prayer service at four-thirty, play at simple games with her new companions between five and six and again between seven and nine, and then promptly retire to a huge sleeping-ward set with small white iron beds in long rows, and lit, after the retiring bell had sounded, by small oil cups or candles burning faintly before various images, all smacked of penance, the more disturbing because it was strange, a form of personal control which she had not sought and could not at once accept.

Nor could she help thinking that some severer form of punishment was yet to be meted out to her, or might ensue by reason of one unavoidable error or another. Life had always been so with her. But, once here a time, things proved not so bad.

The large workroom with its hun-

dred machines and its tall windows, which afforded a stark view of the coal-pockets to the south, and the river with its boats and gulls, proved not unpleasing. The clean, bright windows, polished floors and walls—washed and cleaned by the inmates themselves, the nuns not disdaining to do their share—and the habits of the Sisters, their white-fringed hoods, black robes and clinking beads and their silent tread and low speech, impressed her greatly.

The fact that there was no severe reproof for any failure to comprehend at first, but only slow and patient explanations of simple things, not difficult in themselves to do; that aside from the routine duties, the marching in line with hands crossed over breast and head up, as well as genuflections at mass, prayers before and after meals, at rising and on retiring and at the peal of the Angelus, morning, noon and night, there was no real oppression, finally made her like it.

The girls who were here with her, shy or silent or cold or indifferent at first, and each with her world of past experiences, contacts and relationships locked in her heart, were still, placed as they were elbow to elbow at work, at meals, at prayer, at retiring, incapable of not achieving some kind of remote fellowship which eventually led to speech and confidences.

Thus the young girl who sat next at her right in the sewing-room—Viola Patters by name, a brave, blonde, cheerful little thing—although she had endured much that might be called ill-fortune, was still intensely interested in life.

By degrees and as they worked the two reached an understanding. Viola confessed that her father, who was a non-union painter by trade, had always worked well enough when he could get work, but that he managed badly and could not always get it. Her mother was sickly and they were very poor and there were many children.

Viola had first worked in a box factory, where she had been able to earn only three dollars or less at piece work—"pasting corners," as she described it—and once she had been sworn at and even thrown away from a table at which she had been working because she didn't do it right, and then she quit. Then her father in turn swearing at her for her "uppishness," she had got work in a five-and-ten-cent store, where she had received three dollars a week and a commission of one per cent. on her sales, which were not sufficient to yield more than a dollar more. Then she had secured a better place in a department store at five dollars a week, and there it was that she had come by the handsome boy who had caused her so much trouble.

He was a taxi-driver, who always had a car at his disposal when he worked, only it was very seldom that he cared to work. Although he married her swiftly enough and took her away from her family, still he had not supported her very well, and shortly after they were married he was arrested and accused with two others of stealing a machine and selling it, and after months and months of jail life he had been sentenced to three years in the penitentiary.

In the meantime he had called upon her to aid him, pressed her to raise sums of which she had never previously dreamed—and by ways of which she had never previously dreamed—was pleaded with, all but ordered—and still she loved him. And then in executing the "how" of it she had been picked up by the police and sent here, as had Madeleine, only she never told, not even to Madeleine, what the police had never discovered—that at the suggestion of her first love she had included robbery among her arts.

"But I don't care," she had whispered finally as they worked. "He was good to me, anyhow, when he had work. He was crazy about me, and he liked to go places and dance and eat and see shows when he had money, and he always took me. Gee, the times we've had! And if he wants me to stick to him when he gets out, I will. He ain't

half as bad as some. Gee, you oughta hear some of the girls talk!"

And so it was finally that Madeleine was induced to tell her story.

There were other girls here who, once this bond of sympathy was struck, were keen enough to tell their tales—sad, unfortunate, harried lives all—and somehow the mere telling of them restored to Madeleine some of her earlier faint confidence or interest in life. It was "bad," but it was vivid. For in spite of their unfortunate beginnings, the slime in which primarily and without any willing of their own they had been embedded and from which nearly all were seeking to crawl upwards, and bravely enough, they had heart for and faith in life.

In all cases, apparently, love was their star as well as their bane. They thought chiefly of the joy that might be had in joining their lives with some man or being out in the free world, working again possibly, at least in touch in some feeble way with the beauty and gaiety of life, as beauty and gaiety manifested themselves to them.

And so by degrees, the crash of her own original hopes echoing less and less loudly in the distance, the pain of her great shame and rude awakening passed farther and farther from her. The smoothness and regularity of this austere life, indifferent as it seemed at times, consoled her by its very security and remoteness from the world. It was mean and spare, to be sure, but it offered safety and rest to the mind and heart. Now, rising in her dim, silent ward of a morning, repeating her instructed prayers, marching in silence to chapel, to breakfast, to work, hearing only the soft hum of the machines, marching again to chapel, playing each day, but not too noisily, and finally retiring in the same ordered and silent way to her minute bed, she was soothed and healed.

And yet, or perhaps because of this, she could not help thinking of the clangour and crash of the world without. It had been grim and painful to her, but in its rude, brutal way it had been alive. The lighted streets at night! The cars! That dancing pavilion in which once she had been taught to dance by the great blue sea! The vanished touches of her faithless lover's hands—his kisses—brief, so soon over! Where was he now in the great strange world outside? With whom? What was she like? And would he tire of her as quickly? Treat her as badly? Where was Tina? Frank? Her mother? What had happened to her mother? Not a word had she heard.

To Sister St. Agnes, after a time, sensing her to be generous, faithful, patient, she had confided all concerning herself and her mother, crying on her shoulder, and the Sister had promised to learn what she could. But the investigation proving that her mother had been sent to the workhouse, she deemed it best to say nothing for the present. Madeleine would find her quickly enough on returning to the world. Why cloud the new budding life with so shameful a memory?

VI

And then once more, in due time, and with the memory of these things clinging fast to her, she was sent forth into the world, not quite as inadequate as before, perhaps, but still with the limited equipment which her own innate disposition and comprehension compelled.

After many serious and presumably wise injunctions as to the snares and pitfalls of this world, and accompanied by a black-habited nun, who took her direct to one of those moral and religious families whose strict adherence to the tenets of this particular faith was held to provide an ideal example, she was left to her own devices and the type of work she had previously followed, the nuns themselves being hard put to it to discover anything above the most menial forms of employment for their various charges. Theirs was a type of schooling and training which did not rise above a theory of moral-

ity requiring not so much skill as faith and blind obedience.

And again, here, as in the institution itself, the idea of a faith, a religion, a benign power above that of man and seeking his welfare, surrounded her as the very air itself or as an aura, although she personally was by no means ready to accept it, never having given it serious thought.

Everywhere here, as in the institution itself, were little images or coloured pictures of saints, their brows circled by stars or crowns, their hands holding sceptres or lilies, their bodies arrayed in graceful and soothing robes of white, blue, pink and gold. Their faces were serene, their eyes benignly contemplative, yet to Madeleine they were still images only, pretty and graceful, even comforting, but at so great variance to life as she knew it as to be little more than pretty pictures.

In the great church which they attended, and to which they persuaded her to accompany them, were more of these same candle-lit pictures of saints, images and altars starred with candles, many or few, at which she was wont to stare in wonder and awe. The vestments of the priest and the acolytes, the white-and-gold and red-and-gold of the chasuble and the stole and the cope, the gold and silver crosses, chalices and winecups, overawed her inexperienced and somewhat impressionable mind without convincing it of the imminence of superior forces whose significance or import she could in nowise guess. God, God, God—she heard of Him and the passion and death of the self-sacrificing Lord Jesus.

And here, as there, the silence, the order, the cleanliness and regularity, as well as simplicity, were the things which most invested her reason and offered the greatest contrasts to her old life.

She had not known or sensed the significance of these things before. Now, day by day, like the dripping of water, the ticking of time, they made an impression, however slight. Routine, routine, routine, and the habit and order and colour of a vast and autocratic religion, made their lasting impression upon her.

And yet, in spite of an occasional supervisory visit on the part of one or other of the nuns of the probation department, she was not only permitted but compelled to work out her life as best she might, and upon such wages as she could command or devise. For all the prayers and the good will of the nuns, life was as insistent and driving as ever. It did not appear to be so involved with religion. In spite of the admonitions of the church, the family for whom she was working saw little more in its religious obligation than that she should be housed and fed according to her material merits. If she wished to better herself, as she soon very clearly saw she must, she would have to develop a skill which she did not now have and which, once developed, would make her of small use here. At the same time, if the months spent in the institution had conveyed to her the reasonableness of making something better of her life than hitherto she had been able to do, the world, pleasure, hope clanged as insistently and as wooingly as ever before.

But how? How? was the great problem. Hers was no resourceful, valiant soul, capable of making its own interesting way alone. Think as she would, and try, love, and love only, the admiration and ministering care of some capable and affectionate man was the only thing that seemed likely to solve for her the various earthly difficulties which beset her.

But even as to this, how, in what saving or perfect way, was love to come to her? She had made one mistake which in the development of any honest relationship with another would have to be confessed. And how would it be then? Would love, admiration, forgive? Love, love, love, and the peace and comfort of that happy routine home life which she saw operative in the lives of others—how it glimmered like a far-off star!

And again there was her mother.

It was not long after she had come from the institution that sheer loneliness, as well as a sense of daughterly responsibility and pity had urged her to look up her mother in order that she might restore to herself some little trace of a home however wretched it might be. She had no one, as she proceeded to argue. At least in her own lonely life her mother provided, or would, an ear and a voice, sympathetic if begging, a place to go.

She had learned on returning to their last living-place on one of her afternoons off, that her mother had been sent away to the "Island," but had come back and since been sent to the city poor-farm. This last inquiry led eventually to her mother's discovery of her and of her fixing herself upon her once more as a dependent, until her death somewhat over a year later.

But in the meantime, and after all, life continued to call and call and to drive her on, for she was still full of the hope and fever of youth.

Once, before leaving the institution in which they had worked together, Viola Patters had said to her in one of those bursts of confidence based on attraction:

"Once you're outa here an' I am, too, I'd like to see you again, only there ain't no use your writin' me here, for I don't believe they'd give it to me. I don't believe they'd want us to run together. I don't believe they like me as well as they do you. But you write me, wherever you are, care of ——," and here she gave a definite address—"an' I'll get it when I get out."

She assured Madeleine that she would probably be able to get a good place, once she was free of the control of the Sisters, and then she might be able to do something for her.

Often during these dark new days she thought of this, and being hard-pressed for reasonable interests in her life she finally wrote her, receiving in due time a request to come and see her.

But, as it proved, Viola was no avenue of improvement for her in her new mood. She was, as Madeleine soon discovered, part of a small group which was making its way along a path which she had promised herself henceforth to avoid. Viola was more comfortably placed in quarters of her own than Madeleine had ever been, but the method by which she was forwarding her life she could not as readily accept.

Yet her own life, move about as she might and did after a time from one small position to another, in store or factory, in the hope of bettering herself, held nothing either. Day by day as she worked she sensed all the more clearly that the meagre tasks at which she toiled could bring her nothing of permanent value. Her mother was dead now, and she more alone than ever. During a period of several years, in which she worked and dreamed, leading a thin, underpaid life, her mind was ever on love and what it might do for her—the pressing of a seeking hand, the sanctuary of an enveloping heart.

And then, for the second time in her brief life, love came, or seemed to—at least in her own heart if nowhere else.

She had by now, and through her own efforts, attained to a clerkship in one of the great stores at the salary of seven dollars a week, on which she was trying to live. And then, behold, one day among her customers one of those suave and artful masters of the art of living by one's wits, with a fortune of looks in himself, to whom womanhood is a thing to be taken by an upward curl of a moustache, the vain placement of ringed locks, spotless and conspicuous linen, and clothes and shoes of a newness and lustre all but disturbing to a very work-a-day world. His manners and glances were of a winsomeness which only the feminine heart—and that unschooled in the valuelessness of veneer—fully appreciates.

Yes, the sheer grace of the seeking male, his shallow and heartless courtesy, the lustre of his eye and skin, a certain something of shabby-grand manner, such as she had never known in the particularly narrow world in which

she moved, was sufficient to arrest and fix her interest.

He leaned over and examined the stationery and pencils which she sold, commenting on prices, the routine of her work, smiled archly and suggested by his manner entire that she was one in whom he could be deeply interested. At the same time a certain animal magnetism, of the workings of which she was no more conscious than might be any stick or stone, took her in its tow.

Here was one out of many, a handsome beau, who was interested in her and her little life. The oiled and curled hair became the crown of a god; the moustache and the sharp, cruel nose harmonies of exquisite beauty. Even the muscular, prehensile hands were rhythmic, musical in their movements. She had time only to sense the wonder of his perfect self before he went away. But it was to return another day, with an even more familiar and insinuating grace.

He was interested in her, as he frankly said the next time, and she must be his friend. At lunch-time one day he was waiting to take her to a better restaurant than she would ever have dreamed of entering; on another day it was to dinner that she accompanied him.

According to him, she was beautiful, wonderful. Her flower-like life was being wasted on so rude a task. She should marry him, and then her difficulties would be solved. He was one who, when fortune was with him, so he said, made much, much money. He might even take her from the city at times to see strange places and interesting scenes.

As for her own stunted life, from most of the details of which she forebore, he seemed in nowise interested. It was not due to any lack on her part in the past that her life had been so ill. . . .

Love, love, love. . . . The old story. In a final burst of admiration and love for his generosity she told him of her one great error, which caused him a few moments of solemn cogitation and was then dismissed as nothing of importance, a pathetic, childish mistake. Then there followed one of those swift and seemingly unguarded unions, a commonplace of the tangled self-preserving under-world of poverty. A clergyman was found whose moral assurances seemed to make the union ideal. Then a room in a commonplace boarding-house, and the newer and better life which eventually was to realize all was begun.

VII

To those familiar with the brazen and relentless methods of a certain type of hawk of the underworld which picks fledglings from the nest and springlings from the fields and finds life itself only a hunting-ground in which those mentally or physically weaker than itself may be enslaved, this description will seem neither strained nor inadequate. Fagins of sex, creatures who change their women as they would their coats, they make an easy if reprehensible bed of their lives, and such of their victims as have known them well testify that for a while at least in their care or custody they were not unhappy.

So it was with Madeleine and this one. With amused and laughing tolerance toward her natural if witless efforts to build up a home atmosphere about their presumably joint lives, to build for a future in which they should jointly share, he saw in them only something trivial or ridiculous, whereas to her it was as though the heavens had opened and she was surveying a new world. For in his love and care there was to be peace. Latterly, if not now—for already he complained of conditions which made it impossible for him to work—the results of their several labours were to be pooled in order to prepare for that something better which would soon be achieved—a home, an ideally happy state somewhere. Even children were in her mind.

The mere fact that he shortly com-

plained of other temporary reverses which made it necessary for him and her to keep close watch over their resources, and that for the time being, until he "could arrange his affairs," she must find some employment which would pay much better than her old one, gave her no shock.

Indeed, it was an indescribable joy for her to do for her love, for love had come, that great solvent of all other earthly difficulties, that leveller of all but insurmountable barriers. Even now love was to make her life flower at last. There was an end to loneliness and the oppressive indifference of the great sea of life.

But, as in the first instance, so now the awakening was swift and disconcerting. Realizing the abject adoration in which she held his surface charms and that his thin, tricky soul was the beginning and the end of things for her, it was all the easier to assure her, and soon insist, that the easiest and swiftest way of making money, of which she was unfortunately aware, must be resorted to, for a great necessity had come upon him. The usual tale of a threatening disaster, a sudden loss at cards which might end in imprisonment for him and their enforced separation, was enough.

Swiftly he filled her ears with tales of rescues by women of many of his men friends similarly circumstanced, of the "fools" and "marks" that filled the thoroughfares to be captured and preyed upon by women. Why hesitate? Consider the meagre, beggarly wages she had previously earned, the nothingness of her life before. Why jeopardize their future now? Why be foolish, dull? Plainly it was nothing to love, as he saw it. Should it be so much to her? In this wise she was persuaded.

But now it was not the shame and the fear of arrest that troubled her, but the injury which love had done and was doing her, that cut and burned and seared and scarred.

Love, as she now began dimly to realize once more, should not be so. More than anything else, if love was what she had always dreamed, should it not protect and save and keep her for itself? And now see. Love was sending her out again to loiter in doorways and before windows and "make eyes."

It was this that turned like a wheel in her brain and heart. For in spite of the roughness of her emotional experiences thus far, she had faith to believe that love should not be so, should not do so.

Those features which to this hour, and long after, like those features of her first love, seemed so worship-worth, those eyes that had, or had pretended, to beam with love on her, the lips that had smiled so graciously on her and kissed hers, the hands and arms that had petted and held her, should not be part of the compulsion that sent her here.

No, love should be better than that. He himself had told her so at first—that she was worth more than all else to him—and now see!

And then one night, fully a year and a half later, the climax came. Being particularly irritated by some money losses and the need of enduring her at all, even though she might still prove of some value as a slave, he turned on her with a savage fury.

"What, only . . . ! Get to hell outa here! What do yuh think I am—a sucker? An' let go my arm! Don't come that stuff on me. I'm sick of it. Don't hang on my arm, I tell yuh! I'm tired, damned tired! Get out! Go on—beat it, an' don't come back, see? I'm through—through—yuh hear me? I mean what I say. I'm through, once an' fer all. Beat it, an' fer good. Don't come back. I've said that before, but this time it *goes!* Go on, now, quick—Scat!—an' don't ever let me see yuh around here any more, yuh hear?—yuh damned piece o' mush, yuh!"

He pushed her away, throwing open the door as he did so, and finding her still pleading and clinging, violently pushed and threw her out, cutting her left eye and the back of her left hand

against the jamb of the door by the violence with which he threw her.

There was a cry of "Fred! Fred! Please! Please!"—and then the door was slammed and she was left, as she had never been quite so bereft before, leaning disconsolately and brokenly against the stair-rail outside.

And now, as before, the cruelty and inscrutability of life weighed on her, only now, less than before, had she hope wherewith to buoy herself. It was all so dark, so hopeless. Often in this hour she thought of the swift, icy waters of the river, glistening under a winter moon, and then again of the peace and quiet of the House of the Good Shepherd, its shielding remoteness from life, the only true home or sanctuary she had ever known. And so, brooding and repressing occasional sobs, she made her way toward it, down the long streets, thinking of the pathetically debasing love-life that was now over—the dream of love that never could be again, for her.

VIII

THE stark red walls of the institution stood as before, only dim and grey and cold under a frosty winter moon. It was three of a chill, cold morning. She had come a long way, drooping, brooding, half-freezing and crying. More than once on the way the hopelessness of her life and her dreams had given her pause, causing her to turn again with renewed determination toward the river—only the vivid and reassuring picture she had retained of this same grim and homely place, its restricted peace and quiet, the sympathy of Sister St. Agnes and Mother St. Bertha, had carried her on.

En route she speculated as to whether they would receive her now, so objectionable and grim was her tale. And yet she could not resist continuing toward it, so reassuring was its memory, only to find it silent, not a single light burning. But, after all, there was one, at a side door—not the great cold gate by which she had first been admitted but another to one side, to her an all but unknown entrance; and to it after some brooding hesitation she made her way, ringing a bell and being admitted by a drowsy nun, who ushered her into the warmth and quiet of the inner hallway. Once in she mechanically followed to the bronze grill which, as prison bars, obstructed the way, and here on one of the two plain chairs placed before a small aperture she now sank wearily and looked through.

Her cut eye was hurting her and her bruised hands. On the somewhat faded jacket and crumpled hat, pulled on indifferently because she was too hurt to think or care, there was some blown snow. And when the Sister Secretary in charge of the room after midnight, hearing footsteps, came to the grille, she looked up wanly, her little red, rough hands crossed on her lap.

"Mother," she said beseechingly, "may I come in?"

Then remembering that only Mother St. Bertha could admit her, added wearily:

"Is Mother St. Bertha here? I was here before. She will know me."

The Sister Secretary surveyed her curiously, sensing more of the endless misery that was ever here, but seeing that she was sick or in despair hastened to call her superior, whose rule it was that all such requests for admission should be referred to her. There was no stir in the room in her absence. Presently pattened feet were heard, and the face of Mother St. Bertha, wrinkled and a-weary, appeared at the square opening.

"What is it, my child?" she asked curiously if softly, wondering at the crumpled presence at this hour.

"Mother," began Madeleine tremulously, looking up and recognizing her, "don't you remember me? It is Madeleine. I was here four years ago. I was in the girl's ward. I worked in the sewing-room."

She was so beaten by life, the perpetual endings to her never more than tremulous hopes, that even now and here she expected little more than an

indifference which would send her away again.

"Why, yes, of course I remember you, my child. But what is it that brings you now, dear? Your eye is cut, and your hand."

"Yes, mother, but please don't ask—not now. Oh, please let me come in! I am so tired. I've had such a hard time!"

"Of course, my child," said the Mother, moving to the door and opening it. "You may come in. But what has happened, child? How is it that your cheek is cut, and your hands?"

"Mother," pleaded Madeleine wearily, "must I answer now? I am so unhappy! Can't I just have my old dress and my bed for to-night—that little bed under the lamp?"

"Why, yes, dear, you may have them, of course," said the nun, tactfully sensing a great grief. "And you need not talk now. I think I know how it is. Come with me."

She led the way along bare, dimly lit corridors and up cold solid iron stairs, echoing to the feet, until once more, as in the old days, the severe but spotless room in which were the baths and the hampers for soiled clothes was reached.

"Now, my child," she said, "you may undress and bathe. I will get something for your eye."

And so here at last, once more, Madeleine put aside the pathetic if showy finery that for a time had adorned and shamed her: a twilled skirt she had only recently bought in the pale hope of interesting *him*, the commonplace little hat for which she had paid ten dollars, the striped shirtwaist, once a pleasure to her in the hope that it would please *him*.

In a kind of dumbness of despair she took off her shoes and stockings and, as the Mother left, entered the warm, clean bath which had been provided. She stifled a sob as she did so, and others as she bathed. Then she stepped out and dried her body and covered it with the clean, simple slip of white which had been laid on a chair, brushing her hair and touching her eye, until the Mother Sister returned with an unguent wherewith to dress it.

Then she was led along other silent passages, once dreary enough but now healing in their sense of peace and rest, and so into the great room set with row upon row of simple white iron beds, covered with their snowy linen and illuminated only by the minute red lamps or the small candles burning before their idealistic images here and there, beneath which so many like herself were sleeping. Over the bed which she had once occupied, and which by chance was then vacant, burned the one little lamp which she recognized as of old—her lamp, as she had always thought of it—a thin and flickering flame, before an image of the Virgin. At sight of it she repressed a sob.

"You see, my child," said the Mother Superior poetically, "it must have been waiting for you. Anyhow it is empty. Perhaps it may have known you were coming."

She spoke softly so that the long rows of sleepers might not be disturbed, then proceeded to turn down the coverlets.

"Oh, Mother," Madeleine suddenly whispered softly as she stood by the bed, "won't you let me stay always? I never want to go out any more. I have had such a hard time. I will work so hard for you if you will let me stay!"

The experienced Sister looked at her curiously. Never before had she heard such a plea.

"Why, yes, my child," she said. "If you wish to stay I'm sure it can be arranged. It is not as we usually do, but you are not the only one who has gone out in the past and come back to us. I am sure God and the Blessed Virgin will hear your prayer for whatever is right. But now go to bed and sleep. You need rest. I can see that. And to-morrow, or any time, or never, as you choose, you may tell me what has happened."

She urged her very gently to enter and then tucked the covers about her, laying finally a cool, wrinkled hand on her forehead. For answer Madeleine

seized and put it to her lips, holding it so.

"Oh, Mother," she sobbed as the Sister bent over her, "don't ever make me go out in the world again, will you? You won't, will you? I'm so tired! I'm so tired!"

"No, dear, no," soothed the Sister, "not unless you wish it. And now rest. You need never go out in the world again unless you wish."

And withdrawing the hand from the kissing lips, she tiptoed silently from the room.

A COLLEGE EDUCATION

By T. F. Mitchell

HE always regretted he had never gone to college. He realized all the benefits that he had missed and resolved that his son should not miss them also. The son entered college in due time. His father was overjoyed and waited to hear the first report of his progress. The first report he received was that his son had been killed in the freshman-sophomore pole climbing contest.

RUST

By Mary Carolyn Davies

IRON left in the rain
And fog and dew
With rust is covered.—Pain
Rusts into beauty, too.

I know full well that this is so:
—I had a heartbreak long ago.

WRIST WATCH:—A device for telling its feminine owner what time it was when it stopped.

THE OPPONENT

By L. M. Hussey

I

THEY had eaten their dinner; he was reading now; she looked across at him and realized the magnitude of her task. It was not yet dusk enough to turn on the lights and he sat near the window, inclining his head a little toward the book. A beam of sunlight fell over his face, revealing the transparent freshness of his skin. No lines were visible on his smooth cheeks. He was so appallingly young!

She wanted to talk to him, was about to speak to him, but restrained herself in time. Even in such a small way she must not let him feel any disagreeable necessity, any limitation of his former complete freedom. She hoped that he would understandingly observe the incessant requirements of younger women, their innumerable requisitions for attention, and so attribute his own freedom to the wisdom of her greater maturity. She knew her success would depend upon her ability to convince him of his luck in marrying an older woman.

Now he stood up.

Quickly averting her eyes, she pretended to read the newspaper in her lap. He glanced at her for several seconds and she felt his eyes swiftly examining her. But her gaze was steadfast upon the newspaper.

He turned from the window and walked two or three times up and down the room.

This restlessness was not a new thing; he had manifested it, more or less, for a month now. To find him pacing the room slowly, or staring out of the window in abstraction, had brought her her first real fears, her initial questioning of her powers.

Now, after a few more seconds, she dropped the paper and spoke to him.

"Don't know what to do with yourself?" she asked.

He smiled at her faintly.

"No, no. Just a little restless. . . ."

"Do you want to go out, dear?"

"Do *you?*" he asked.

Of course she wanted to be with him. The hours when she was alone were intolerably long. But she restrained her wish. Her purpose was to give him that necessary sense of freedom.

"Not particularly," she said. "I thought you might want to take a little walk yourself; I'll stay here and read."

Looking down at the carpet, he frowned faintly.

"I believe I will," he said at last. "Been indoors all day; it sort of gets on the nerves. You don't mind, do you, Emily? I won't be long."

She stood up, went over to him, and put her hand on his shoulder.

For a second only a certain pity came to her that was wholly unselfish. She had an impulse to go, to go for ever, and so free him of her limitation. But this was impossible after all she had dreamed, and in the face of her astounding hopes. But her fears were making her foolish; assuredly he loved her—he would never consent to a parting from her; and this thought was warming, like one of his own caresses. She patted his shoulder gently.

"Don't hurry back until you want to," she said. "Stay as long as you like. I won't be lonesome; I'll be waiting for you!"

Now he smiled, and, touching her cheek affectionately with his lips, he left the room with a quick step. She heard him descend the stairs, take up his hat in the hall and leave the house. Then she went to the window, but he did not cross the street, and the porch prevented any view of him.

On the opposite side of the street a girl was passing. She was quite young, full of self-consciousness and the consciousness of sex; she glanced about her eagerly, she patted the puffed hair that enclosed her ears, she toyed with a chain of beads that was pendant from her neck. The sight of her put a fear in the heart of the watching woman. Suppose he was going out to meet a young girl!

Her instinct to fight for what she had gained whirled her from the window, took her a dozen steps across the room with a determination to follow him. Before she reached the door her impulse faded. A depressing languor possessed her.

Suppose he did, suppose he found a young girl on the street—what could she do?

With all her wish to protect herself, to insure her matured dreams, she had no weapons of direct defence. The knowledge of her powerlessness brought her dismay. An unwonted regret, of late an emotion she knew with increasing frequency, crept into her heart. She sat motionless in the chair, with a deep frown cutting her forehead.

She was possessed with the conviction of her folly in having married him. She was acutely conscious of the separating barrier nearly fifteen years made between them.

At first she had been proud of her ability to charm him. Even in these days, moments of that initial pride returned. After all, how easy it had been to secure his name—what a naïve being a young man was! She had no just foundation for pride. But for this fear that now replaced her earlier emotion there was an adequate basis. She had given herself over to hopes, to the obscure enchantments of romance, to the glamorous expectations that should have died with the passing of her youth—and she dreaded her disillusionment.

It had grown entirely dark. The red gleams of the fading sunlight had been replaced by a ghoulish glow from the arc lamp across the street, entering the window like a stealthy presence.

She heard the door open below and she knew that he had returned.

Arising swiftly, she went to the wall and switched on the light. She was standing in the door as he ascended the stairs.

"Where did you go?" she asked.

"Took a walk up to the park," he answered. "I sat there and watched the kids making fools of themselves—just like I used to do!"

She understood. He had been watching lovers on the park benches. She smiled half pathetically.

"I suppose you felt full of regrets?"

He put his hands on her shoulders and kissed her. It was a perfunctory embrace. She understood it instantly as a temporizing gesture that gave him a second to frame the lie of his denial.

"Don't believe that," he said. "Not a bit of it. . . ."

Entering the room, he looked about uneasily for a few seconds. Then, saying nothing further, he took up the abandoned book and began to read hurriedly, as if in escape from his thoughts. She seated herself and watched him.

In the harsh glow of the electric light he looked younger than ever. Observing him, she began to feel a curious displeasure in this palpable evidence of youth, such an emotion as one might feel before a nameless, yet insurmountable, superiority.

At last, finding herself tortured with this new and strange uneasiness, she arose and left the room without a word.

II

THE first months of their marriage had given some strength to her illusions. They were together every possible hour then. It thrilled her to find that he was proud of her; he was eager

to exhibit her to all his friends; they went out together very frequently.

She knew that she was still agreeable as a woman; the years had marked her much less than most of her acquaintances. In every artful manner she endeavoured to enhance this measure of charm that remained to her: in the youthful piling up of her plentiful hair, in the simplicity of the dresses that her slender figure still permitted, in the adroit touches of rouge to her somewhat pallid cheeks, in the carefully pencilled lines beneath her dark lashes.

Yet she understood, in a vague way, that the boy's pleasure in her was not aroused by her counterfeiting of youth, but by the very fact that she was older than most of the women whom he and his friends had known. It flattered him to demonstrate that he had qualities to interest a woman of her age. By turns this brought her pleasure and disquiet.

One morning, after he had left for the day, his parting words of a few minutes before came into her mind with the accompaniment of a sudden revelation. At the last moment he had told her not to wait dinner for him.

"I'll be at the office until ten or eleven this evening," he said.

In saying this he had fumbled with his hat and averted his eyes. Now she remembered that nervousness, and a cold suspicion chilled her like the utterance of a harsh sentence from beloved lips.

In another instant she denied the suspicion, but a certain realization persisted.

His old eagerness to be with her was fading!

She recalled that for nearly two weeks they had been nowhere together outside their home, not even in the simplicity of a walk through the streets. For more than a month they had not dined out in a restaurant.

As a corollary to this apprehension, she remembered certain criticisms of late. Once he had objected to a new method of arranging her hair.

"You look younger the other way," he had said.

Again, he had disliked a new frock.

"I think it makes you look too old," was his comment.

He was losing that early pride; he was beginning to feel the separation of her maturity.

The thought obsessed her through the day. With it returned her suspicions. The definiteness of her earlier denial became impossible.

Again and again a relentless, intuitive logic destroyed all efforts to ease her distress. Since he found her less and less agreeable, he must be turning to someone else. He was young! This characterization of him, this single word, youth, seemed to imply any possibility, any perfidy, any unfaithfulness.

A grim emotion, the kin of an obscure hate, entered her consciousness. A profound dislike of all that was young, of the word itself, smouldered in her emotions like a cold fire, charged with the potentiality of flame.

Toward evening the notion that he had lied to her became a conviction. At first she responded to it by the disarming knowledge of her helplessness. Nevertheless, this sort of conviction could never be a certainty without the definiteness of a sensual confirmation—she must see, she must hear his voice murmuring to that other person—that *young* person; impossible, of course. She would not know where to find him. But at any rate the lie could be proven to a certain measure. She could determine his absence from the office.

She ate no dinner at all. She waited implacably for enough time to pass for the accomplishment of her purpose. It would not do to go down town too soon. Perhaps he would remain in his office until seven or eight o'clock. Perhaps that was the appointed place of meeting.

The notion that the unknown girl might be coming to him there—and so afford an opportunity for that entire proof of her first desire—now had no influence upon her action.

She shrank from any such meeting, from such a devastating positiveness of

proof. She still held to a frail hope, to the tenuous hope that even the demonstration of his empty office would leave her. He might be able to explain. In this hour, when by her own determination she threatened all the edifice of her dreams, she found her courage inadequate to a final, definitive gamble with her visions.

After eight o'clock she left the house. She took the car down town, got off at last, and mingled with the crowds. The rush of people presented themselves in a new aspect.

At other times, with *him*, she had seen only smiling faces, the seekers of an evening's entertainment. Now, other countenances were apparent.

She perceived distracted eyes, drawn lips, women who passed alone and furtively, men who hurried with knitted brows. It seemed to her then that a multitudinous tragedy was abroad in life, moving like a universal presence, the symbol of life itself. The laughs of women, mingling with the noise of the streets, the bright eyes, the curved lips, were nothing save the immaterial foam of an implacable and fathomless reality, that like the sea would rise at last in a whelming wave, scattering this iridescence into nothingness.

She paused before a tall building and stood irresolutely in front of the doors.

At last she went in.

Two men were conversing in the lobby. The elevator cages were deserted, save for a single car, in which the operator sat stolidly. She approached him and entered. At other times she had been there in the evening, accompanied by her young lover, and he recognized her. He took her up without a question.

When she got out a sudden weakness kept her close to the iron grating for several seconds.

Now, with only a few steps to go, it seemed impossible to accomplish her purpose. An immense fear of the truth made her tremble softly. But at last she drew away and walked slowly down the corridor.

She came to the general offices first; they were dark. He, as secretary to the general manager, had a little cubic room of his own with a door opening upon the hall.

As she approached this she saw a band of light thrown over the tiled floor in front of her; a second later she was opposite the illuminated glass panel of his door.

She heard voices speaking within. First his own—and then that of another man. He had not lied; he was working. . . .

She returned home with exulting spirits. Later, when he arrived, she met him at the door with such an ardour of welcoming embraces that his own warmth flamed up; they stood just inside the hall, their arms closely entwined, like two who had found each other after some long and intolerable separation.

III

For a few days something of their earlier relation returned to them. Accusing herself severely, Emily made herself believe that through the folly of her groundless fears alone she had pitched her emotions at an absurd tension. She should have known better. If the years she had lived had deprived her of youth's supreme assurance, at least she should have gained some common sense.

Her trouble, she reasoned, lay in her incapacity for faith, her lack of power to believe in good fortune. So now she tried to be assured.

This agreeable condition of her emotions persisted for a week or more—until her fears were shocked into being again by an alarming little incident that happened one evening as they emerged from a theatre together.

It was not late; the entertainment had bored them and they thought it better to return home. They arose and made their way toward the exit.

Following him up the dim aisle, Emily had been full of content. They were going home, to be alone with each

other, to enjoy the communion of their undisturbed nearness. At the door she slipped her arm under his. They emerged to the street side by side.

At that moment a girl was crossing the lobby, walking diagonally toward the entrance. Emily had not observed her specifically, she was only one in the shifting mosaic of the street. Then the young man at Emily's side paused, almost stopped. She glanced up quickly at his face.

His eyes were upon the girl, and her own followed instantly. The girl caught his glance and she, too, paused.

Emily believed that her expression changed, that on the face of this stranger there came a look of recognition and an accompanying look of wonder. An instant later their progress across the lobby was resumed.

Not more than three or four seconds sufficed for the enactment of this incident.

But its significance to the woman was profound. Before they reached the sidewalk a sudden question passed her lips.

"Who was that?" she asked.

Coloured by no caressing inflection, her low voice was harsh.

For a moment he hesitated; it seemed to her he was on the point of pretending that she was not understood. But his answer admitted comprehension.

"I don't know," he said. "At first—"

"What?"

"At first I thought she was an old acquaintance. A girl I knew at school. That I hadn't seen for a long time. That wasn't the case. But she made me stare for a second."

She offered no comment. She felt that his words were untrue, that he had divined her suspicion and was lying to her.

This was not a stranger, mistaken for a former friend, but someone whom he had met recently. She recalled the girl's expression — the almost indubitable look of surprise. Her suspicions were rapidly confirmed. He knew this girl, who saw him for the first time with his wife. No doubt he was lying to her also.

The last thought brought no corollary of sympathetic pity for the girl. Her vividly remembered image came into the woman's mind with the effect of a maddening colour upon her sensibilities.

She saw the face with its rounded curves, the waves of fresh hair, the slim body abounding with the rhythm of youth; she saw her *youth*, all her abominable youngness! She hated her as now she hated anything that was young. The word was her opponent, looming more implacably up with every passing day. She withdrew her arm from the man at her side.

As they returned, he endeavoured several times to make her talk, but her answers were never more than monosyllables. She angered him at last; neither spoke; they came to their house and entered, sullen in their silence.

But indoors, alone with him, the sight of his compressed lips provoked her speech.

"There's no reason for you to be angry!" she exclaimed. "You might at least be sorry!"

He turned toward her, his eyes searching her face.

"I don't know what's the matter with you," he said. "I haven't an idea what you're talking about."

"Yes you have! You told me a lie! You knew her—that girl. . . ."

She paused, drew in a quick breath, and looked at him with angry eyes.

He stood before her, half angry himself and half astonished. His lips were slightly parted and their full curve made his face very young. This knowledge of his youth enraged her.

"Go out!" she exclaimed, her voice a subdued scream. "Go out and find her now! I don't want you, you little kid! Go out and find someone like yourself. I don't want to see you; I'm sick of you; go away!"

She took a step toward him, with her fingers pressed into two tense fists. An instant, and she had the impulse to beat them in his face. And then

this fury subsided; she stood trembling a second, her cheeks white, her eyes wide, like one who had just faced a spectre of horror.

Turning, she ran to the stairs, and breathlessly ascended in immediate flight.

Later she heard his step in the hall; she crept to the door and opening it upon him she threw herself into his arms, stopping whatever words were on his lips with the urgency of her passionate kisses.

IV

Yet after this a certain new quality entered into their relation. It was as if her moment of blazing and accusing jealousy had stripped away a needed pretence, laying bare something fundamental, something that should have been hidden. There was between them now the looming possibility of disaster; her words had revealed it, and its ghostly presence moved between them in their most intimate hours.

The months passed; her mood was almost constantly one of depression. Yet she lacked any acute sensations. Her senses seemed dull, her mind seemed dull. They lived very much as before; they saw each other every day; they had even their instants of passion, but no white shaft of assured dreams stood up in their future. And more and more he stayed away from the house.

For a long time whatever suspicions she had merged without vitality into her general lethargy of spirit. In a way, she was afraid of any flaming suspicions. She feared to test them, she inwardly dreaded any attempt at their verification. To know the truth, by the evidence of her senses—what would she do then?

It was after the reading of a certain romantic book that her emotions stirred once more into vigour. The manner of their life was suddenly and cruelly luminous; it appalled her. Together, they were as the ghosts of their former selves, with every dream departed!

It seemed to her she could win him back, give him his former pride in her, establish her old allure. She bought new dresses, she painted her cheeks and lips again, she exercised a thousand feminine tricks; he was indifferent.

One night, when he turned carelessly, without even seeing, from the invitation of her lips, the hot anger of other days stirred in her blood like a maddening fluid. She held no doubt—there was someone else!

She determined on the certainty of proof. He had a frequent habit of going out after dinner to walk alone for an hour or two. At last she began to follow him.

Half a square behind, keeping unobtrusively to the windows of stores or to the steps of houses, pressing close to walls, she watched him. She passed obliviously through crowds, only his form in her eyes. For a time she was without success.

But at last she made her discovery.

It was not, strangely enough, during one of the instances of her designed search, but came in a moment of accident. It happened early one afternoon.

She was down town shopping. At the moment when she encountered him he was not even in her mind. She had just come out from a store, had taken a few steps along the crowded pavement—and they came face to face.

A young girl was holding his arm. His head was inclined to her face in an unmistakable attitude of affection.

This sudden sight of him, curiously enough, did not instantly chill her. Just in that moment she was elated; she felt the thrill of success, the end of a long search.

Then he saw her.

Their eyes met.

His cheeks reddened and his confusion gave her a sardonic pleasure.

"How do you do?" she said, and passed.

She saw him mechanically lift his hat, just as the sight of him went from her eyes.

Then an icy inflexibility possessed her senses. Her mouth hardened, her eyes

narrowed, and all the years of her life, the years that she had sought to cheat with her belated dreams, rushed to her face, making her old. Very firmly she walked to the corner and took the car.

At home she waited for him. She felt strong and a passionate purpose shaped itself in her mind.

Entirely patient, she waited through the slow hours; the afternoon passed at last; finally the door opened and she heard him enter the house.

Walking out into the hall she confronted him. His gaze dropped before her eyes.

She made a short, beckoning gesture, a gesture of command, and he followed her into the drawing-room.

She sat down and waited for him to seat himself in front of her. As if he obeyed the unspoken purpose of her will, he dropped into a chair.

"I suppose you love her very much!" she said.

He did not reply; he stared at the carpet and with one hand slowly twisted the edge of his coat.

"How long?" she asked.

Now he looked up at her and the light of a recent determination revealed itself in his steadied eyes.

"I don't suppose you will forgive me," he said.

"I won't," she answered.

"But maybe you will understand. Emily, perhaps you can . . . can be kind. . . ."

"What do you mean?"

"I made a mistake," he muttered.

She laughed: a harsh cachinnation that seemed to jangle in the air of that little room like some disharmonious instrument struck by sardonic hands.

"I understand that!" she exclaimed.

"With you—and me," he added.

She was silent.

Now his resolution took a fresh urge, and fixing his eyes upon her, he pleaded his case.

"I thought we could be happy," he began. "I know we could have been. If only—if only I had been older. I came to feel some strange separation between us. I didn't understand it at first; I used to worry; I used to wonder. . . . It was because I was too young for you. Don't you see? Don't you understand? Then—I met her so naturally. . . ."

The woman before him was silent and his voice went on, rising and falling, taking on a passionate inflection, bathing her ears in a malignancy of sound. She looked at his face, his young face. And the hatred of his youth, of all youth, stirred her with an immovable resolve.

He was asking her to free him; he would give her the divorce; they could decide on the grounds.

"I didn't know," he pleaded. "I didn't see! I didn't understand, at my age, all that just being young demanded of me. . . ."

Still she was silent.

"I know you're kind," he said. "You'll say yes, won't you?"

He drew a little closer to her and his eyes, alive with hope, looked at her with the expectancy of their abominable youth. His opposing youth, the opponent of her dreams! She understood him, she comprehended what *he* dreamed. She saw all the glamorous romance he so dearly wanted from life.

She did not know how long she could be the avenging instrument of his torment, nor in what sudden tragic way he might free himself from the bonds of her devising, but she set herself implacably to the achievement of at least a day, a week, a year, of her requital.

She began to smile slowly.

He watched her with eagerness.

"You'll say yes, won't you?" he repeated. "You'll let me free?"

Still smiling, she softly spoke her imprisoning word.

"No," she said.

POLYCHROME AT EVENING

By Jean Allen

AND now,
Our last island day has ended.
You must go from me,
Across the space of lilac sea
To the distant line
Of indigo-violet land
On the far horizon.

To-night
As we came down the hill
To the beach,
The ice blue sky
Was filled with far-flung clouds
Sailing like full rigged galleons
Before the wind,
Towards the sunset's flaming heart.

Now,
You will sail
Into the deepening rose and blue,
And I shall go back
Alone
Through the closing amethyst light.
On the brow of the hill
I shall sit,
Midst the scent of bayberry
And the southward sound of the surf,
And watch your darkening sails
Fade in the night.

Lonely, I shall be, perhaps.
What matters it? . . .
I have known peace,
And had a dream come true.

WHAT makes a husband angry is not the fact of a man staring at his wife, but the fact that she enjoys it.

PERSONALLY CONDUCTED

By J. L. Morgan

I

"LEE!" Charley Lee, slipping through the club grill, turned at the calling of his name and saw Mr. William Duncan sitting alone at a table in a dimly lit corner of the room.

"Come here!" Mr. Duncan beckoned with a show of hospitality. "Sit down and have a drink."

Mr. Lee glanced at the bottle of imitation beer in front of his friend and declined brusquely: "That stuff? Not on your life!"

"Well, sit down anyhow. I'm lonesome."

"Can't. I'm in a hurry," said Lee, endeavouring to conceal a cylindrical package under his arm in the folds of his raincoat. He bungled at this, a thing that did not escape Mr. Duncan's sharp eyes.

"Can't you sit down—just a minute?" There was an injured tone in Mr. Duncan's voice, and Lee sat down grudgingly.

"Well, not over a minute. I'm giving a little poker party out at my house to-night and I just dropped in to get a few bottles of charged water. I've got to hurry out."

"Is that all you came down for?" inquired Mr. Duncan, his eye on the raincoat.

Mr. Lee, somewhat confused, coughed.

"Well, not exactly," he admitted. "I'm taking out a bottle of Scotch, in case any of the boys want a drink. My very last bottle."

Billy Duncan nodded sympathetically. "It's a pretty scarce article, Charley."

"You bet it is. I don't know what I am going to do after this is gone."

Familiar words were these to Duncan. He, too, belonged to "the-very-last-bottle" school, as did everyone in the club since the enforcement of the prohibitory law.

"Well, I've got to be on my way," said Lee, rising from his chair.

"Wait a minute, Charley. Slip me one out of the bottle before you go."

Thwarted, Mr. Lee sat down again and somewhat reluctantly produced his bottle.

Duncan, corkscrew in hand, opened it expertly.

"Here, boy," ordered Lee, "bring a glass."

"Make it two," amended Duncan, assuming the role of host. "And some ice and a bottle of water."

"Damn the fellow's impudence!" thought Lee.

It was worse than useless to combat Billy Duncan. For Duncan had a way of accomplishing things. He was a "go-getter," and even now he was planning nothing less than the sequestration of Mr. Lee's bottle.

"A fine piece of goods, Charley—exceedingly fine," said Duncan, lowering his glass. "It is ex*qui*site!"

"I should say that you are a good judge," observed Lee, a trifle pleased, though none the less diligent in driving the cork back into the bottle.

"Charley, what I wanted to see you about is this: There's going to be a big advance in a certain stock within the next few days, and I wanted to put you in—"

"Don't want to be in!" interrupted Lee, shaking his head. "Last month's cotton market cured me of speculation. I'm off for life!"

Mr. Duncan pondered. This was

evidently a wrong lead. He tried another.

"Say, Charley, I got a rich piece of gossip for you. You'll bust your sides when you hear it."

He related a story concerning a fellow member.

The incident, somewhat old, was embellished with a few additional facts of Mr. Duncan's own invention and delivered in his best style — yet Mr. Lee's sides remained intact. He never even smiled.

"I heard all that a month ago," he said, looking at his watch. "Gee, it's nearly eight."

He rose to go, but Mr. Duncan laid upon him a detaining hand. "Just one more little snifter, Charley, and then I'm going to tell you something that'll make your eyes stick out a foot."

With extreme hesitation Lee once more produced the bottle and poured two scant drinks. And during this process Mr. Duncan racked his brain for the thing that would produce the desired effect on Mr. Lee's eyes — and his bottle.

Two attempts had failed signally.

There was no hope of holding his victim longer if the next failed, so upon this he concentrated a last despairing effort.

"For a long time, Charley," he said, slowly sipping his drink, "I didn't think I'd tell you. Fact is, I guess I was a little jealous, and—"

"Well, what is it?" demanded Lee impatiently. "Get to the point."

"It's about a woman—a very beautiful woman, Charley. And she wants to meet you."

For the first time Lee showed a sign of interest. He smiled and laid his glass on the table.

"On the level?"

Duncan, watching him narrowly, breathed a sigh of relief.

Here, at last, he had found the weak spot in Lee's armour.

"My sacred word," he vowed solemnly. "My Gawd, what a vision she is!" With these words Mr. Duncan took the liberty of pouring out two more drinks.

"Charley, I think she's the handsomest creature that ever stepped in shoe-leather! And simply crazy to meet you. That's what made me—well, just a trifle sore. But I'm too good a friend of yours, Charley, to hold it against you. Why should I?"

"No reason at all," averred the owner of the Scotch. "But go on. Tell me about it."

"I'm going to do that very thing," said Mr. Duncan, calmly slipping Lee's bottle out from under his arm and placing it on the table between them. "That's why I have been waiting here to see you."

Now followed a most marvellous tale of a beautiful woman's infatuation. Omitting anachronisms, it showed a marked similarity to an episode in the life of Haroun al Raschid, a case, no doubt, of unconscious plagiarism.

It seemed, according to Mr. Duncan, that a certain young woman, a ravishing brunette from New Orleans, had beheld Mr. Lee at the theatre, and so smitten was she with his masculine charms that she had made every effort to meet him. At last, through the good offices of her hostess, she had become acquainted with Mr. Duncan, and through him she hoped to meet her heart's desire.

Mr. Duncan admitted frankly his own attachment for the fair visitor, his desperate love-making and her indifference. Somewhat bitterly he added to this his personal estimate of the woman's mentality. Her choice seemed incomprehensible. He placed in parallel the symmetry of his own face and figure with those of his friend—much to the latter's disparagement. He gave the matter up as one of the inexplicable vagaries of the feminine mind; and he took another drink.

The conclusion of the narrative left Mr. Lee in a high state of impatience. His hair was getting thin and, although constantly in its quest, romance came to him all too infrequently. Now, his one

overpowering desire was to become acquainted with his conquest.

"When are you going to take me out, Billy?" he inquired anxiously.

Mr. Duncan surveyed the bottle. It was more than half full.

"It's got to be to-night," he said. "She's going away to-morrow."

"Here, boy!" summoned Lee. "Call these fellows up"—he rattled off a list of names—"and tell them the poker game's off. Tell them I'm sick—tell 'em anything."

He turned to Duncan.

"Well, I'm ready. Let's go."

"Not so fast, my young Lochinvar, not so fast," said Mr. Duncan, pouring himself a liberal libation. "Curious folk, these New Orleanians. They make a great ceremony of dinner—Sazarac cocktails, *bouillabaisse*, black coffee, and all that. It takes time. Rarely finish before ten. It would be unpardonable to arrive before they retire to the drawing-room. In fact—"

"Well, well!"

Mr. Lee turned in his chair and beheld Doc Clark and Henry Burke staring at him from the grill-room door.

"Say," called Clark, "I thought you were sick! How 'bout that poker game?"

Mr. Duncan noted pleasurably that the Doctor carried a cylindrical package under his arm. He welcomed them at once.

"Come on over, fellows," he said. "Come on over and have a little snort."

And with these words he placed Mr. Lee's bottle at their disposal.

Explanations by Mr. Duncan now followed. Again he plagiarized the tale from the Arabian Nights, in spite of Mr. Lee's protests; and with the second telling there were many new and thrilling embellishments—the result being that both the Doctor and Mr. Burke declared with enthusiasm their intention of joining the party.

Mr. Lee was visibly perturbed. He had pictured his presentation to the ravishing belle of New Orleans as the beginning of a beautiful romance, and he wanted no audience. Under the table he kicked Mr. Duncan on the shins, but that individual merely moved his chair and proceeded in his calm, inflexible way.

Up to this time Mr. Duncan had allowed his imaginative brain to ramble at large. He had no purpose other than to possess the contents of Mr. Lee's bottle, and upon the completion thereof he had intended to abandon him at once and go home. But with the arrival of Doc Clark and his cylindrical package larger plans immediately suggested themselves. Clark must be held at all hazards.

Now Duncan had found, a couple of weeks previous, in the course of a night's adventuring by taxi, a roadhouse of thrilling possibilities. It was rather remotely located in the suburbs of the city, and he now remembered that he had become acquainted there with a number of interesting, if unconventional, women. Moreover, he recalled that some drinks had been surreptitiously served, and, all in all, he had had a most enjoyable evening. To this place, now, he resolved to take his friends—introduce the first attractive young woman he should meet as the girl from New Orleans, and let subsequent events take care of themselves.

After the second drink Doc Clark conceived a secret idea of stealing the belle of New Orleans from Lee, thereby unconsciously joining Mr. Burke in a purpose which he had from the outset. And in furthering this he produced his bottle, Lee's having become exhausted, and dedicated it to the pleasure of the evening. All hands now became impatient to set out on the adventure, and Mr. Duncan was forced to activity.

"I'd better call up first," he said, producing a small, red and rather soiled memorandum book in which was written some pages of telephone numbers, "and see if everything is all right."

This he proceeded to do. And it was while he was thus engaged that the party was further enlarged by the addition of Mr. Jim Webster and Mr. Sam Hooper.

These gentlemen, who had strolled

idly into the grill, had been immediately invited to join the expedition by Mr. Lee, who, somewhat stimulated, had experienced a change of heart and had thrown discretion to the winds. It was now his desire that all should witness the capitulation of the belle of New Orleans. He told of her great beauty, and, while Mr. Hooper and Mr. Webster nudged each other, of her madness for him—a thing, he assured them, not to be wondered at in the least.

Mr. Burke ordered a taxicab. It was a vehicle which he had used on numerous occasions and of which he spoke in the highest commendation.

"Listen," he said. "The chauffeur of this here boat is an ex-burglar by the name of Sweeney, and he can horn us in anywhere. And if it comes to a scrap he's there with a two-foot monkey-wrench. Some driver, I'm here to tell you!"

Mr. Sweeney's qualifications met universal approval and he was summoned.

Meantime, Mr. Duncan, who had made definite arrangements over the telephone, rejoined the party gleefully. He told them that by a fortunate coincidence the hostess, a widow, by the way, and a woman of great charm, was giving a party that evening to a number of her women friends, and that he and his party of gentlemen would be warmly welcomed.

A bellboy announced the arrival of Mr. Sweeney and his craft, and after a final drink around the party hurried outside to the waiting machine.

Here a difficulty confronted them. The piratical cab was designed to carry but four passengers. Six would laden it far below its Plimsoll line and necessitate an undue crowding. However, after some argument, the lightest of the passengers, Mr. Hooper and Mr. Lee, were taken on the laps of those in the back seat, and the expedition started.

II

Mr. Duncan, custodian of Doc Clark's bottle, passed it around and Mr. Webster broke into song—"A Life on the Ocean Wave." This musical offering was of short duration, as it was changed after the first stanza to entreaties to Mr. Hooper "not to bear down so hard, especially going over the bumps."

Mr. Burke becoming likewise vexed at the angularity of Mr. Lee, reviled him unmercifully. At intervals he offered his burden to Duncan, who sat in the middle, and as often was he scorned and adjured to "be game!" The din of the ex-burglar's cab was deafening. It rattled in every joint and bearing, and above it all was the tubercular cough of an engine that was all but falling to pieces.

Far out in the environs of the city the machine, at Mr. Duncan's direction, turned off the macadam road into a rocky lane. Over this it bumped for several miles, accompanied by the vehement protests of Mr. Webster and Mr. Burke. It stopped suddenly, as did the lane, and Mr. Sweeney announced briefly that they were in the middle of a cornfield. There was nothing to do but back out and try again. This Sweeney did, relying on Mr. Duncan's orientation—with the net result that after some miles of rough journeying they arrived back in the identical spot in the cornfield.

Here another calamity befell them. The bottle, the panacea for all evils, became exhausted and they were confronted with the appalling horrors of thirst.

Their lack of foresight in not being properly provisioned engendered bitter wrangling among them, and Sweeney, after listening to them for a while, suggested that he might produce a bottle—for a consideration.

This was oil on troubled waters, but when the ex-burglar set his price they were staggered. Mr. Lee, confident in his hundred and twenty pounds of bone and brawn, announced his intention of whipping the profiteer then and there. Whereupon the ex-burglar pulled his two-foot monkey-wrench and awaited the attack with a calmness and confidence born of long experience. A com-

promise was effected, after considerable argument, and Sweeney laid aside his weapon and produced from the toolbox a square-necked bottle which he declared contained gin, "extra fine."

The new bottle had a peculiar tang. Indeed, connoisseurs all, they agreed with much profanity that they had never tasted anything like it.

"Sufferin' polecats!" gasped Mr. Hooper. "Some water—quick!"

Water, however, was a thing which they had neglected to provide, so Mr. Hooper was forced to cool his burning gullet by blasts of air from his lungs, the sounds emanating from him resembling with great fidelity the exhaust of a heavy mogul engine pulling a freight train up a steep grade.

The dearly purchased liquor did have a kick to it. They all agreed as to that afterward. It deadened all feeling in Mr. Webster's knees and, now unmindful of Mr. Hooper's weight, he again burst into song—a ballad narrating that he loved somebody as he had never loved before, all of which happened since first he met her on the village green.

These two lines comprised Mr. Hooper's entire knowledge of the ditty and he sang them over and over.

Once more they backed out of the cornfield and set sail for the house of the charming widow and the beautiful belle of New Orleans. They rode for miles while the metre fatefully ticked off the reckoning. Once they stopped while Sweeney examined the brake-bands of the car. The odour of burning fabric was located, however, in Mr. Lee's hat, the same, and some of Mr. Lee's hair, being afire from Mr. Burke's cigar.

Some time later Mr. Duncan sighted a brilliantly lighted house set well back in the trees.

"Here's the place, boys!" he shouted. "At least I think it is," he amended, shutting one eye for better vision. "I'm almost sure it is."

They drove in.

The Doctor and Mr. Webster were asleep, but the stopping of the car woke them and automatically they reached for the bottle.

"Now, boys," admonished Mr. Duncan, "remember these girls are Bohemians and full of pep. Don't try to pull any highbrow stuff, but give 'em something quick and devilish from the jump."

"*Hooray!*" shouted Mr. Lee loudly. "That's the stuff!"

Sweeney, staring at the house, saw a curtain pulled aside and a face appear at a window.

"This is a new one on me, gents. Are you sure it's the right place?"

The guide, Mr. Duncan, was not sure. In fact, he was very dubious. Then as the rippling music of a piano floated through the night air all doubt vanished.

"Sure it is!" he said. "I remember now, it's the place with a piano."

III

FOLLOWING him, they trooped up the steps.

He found the doorbell, eventually—one of the twisting kind—and on this he rang a loud and continuous jingle.

The door was opened almost immediately, and Mr. Duncan faced a very good-looking woman in evening attire.

"De-lighted! De-lighted!" he exclaimed. "Want you to meet some of my friends." He turned to the others. "Come on, fellows—this is the place, all right."

They clattered noisily in after him, the woman looking at them with something between a smile of welcome and a stare of astonishment.

"First," said Mr. Duncan in presenting Doc Clark, "I want you to meet good old Dr. Cook—the celebrated discoverer of the North Pole. Doctor Cook, Mrs. Pazazas."

"Higginson," she corrected.

Mr. Duncan smiled amiably.

"A rose would smell as sweet," he commented. "What's in a name between friends?"

Mr. Lee pushed himself forward and was duly presented.

"We have here," said the orator of

the evening, "Mr. Richard K. Snodfish, second assistant receiving teller of the Little Wonder Waffle Works—"

"My name's Lee," put in that individual indignantly. "Charles T. Lee."

"I regret to say Mr. Snodfish has been drinking," apologized Mr. Duncan. "He's not quite himself this evening as you will note by the hole in his hat."

Mr. Lee wrenched himself loose from his tormentor, and, seeing through the open door a handsome young woman whom he instantly recognized as the belle of New Orleans, approached and introduced himself.

"I am Mr. Lee," he said, "the gentleman you have desired to meet."

The startled look that appeared on the girl's face was succeeded by one of amusement.

"Indeed I have," she said, "most ardently. Now sit right down and tell me all about yourself."

Mr. Lee complied instantly.

He seated himself and began a long rambling story of his life in which he was the sole and only hero.

Mr. Webster waited for no introduction. Boldly following Lee into the drawing-room, he saw a fat woman in an extremely low-cut gown. There were several other ladies in the room, but here Mr. Webster at once made his selection. As he sat down beside her on the divan he reached for her hand, plunging immediately into what book-agents call a "hot canvas."

In the hall, Mr. Duncan was introducing Mr. Burke. He divulged the fact that this gentleman was none other than a Persian nobleman travelling incognito. The nobleman's mission was that of discovering and bringing back to his native land the night-blooming sassafras held sacred by certain of the hill tribes. On this theme Mr. Duncan expanded. The exburglar's gin was carburizing perfectly and, figuratively speaking, Mr. Duncan was hitting on all cylinders. In the middle of it he paused suddenly as he saw a man coming down the steps from the floor above.

The intruder was a tall, austere person with side-whiskers. There was something vaguely familiar in the lean grim face, and Duncan, in a laboured attempt at recognition, placed a hand over one eye to dispel an annoying and persistent double vision. Then he knew.

The man was a fellow member of the Club, a Mr. Blodgett.

Blodgett, Duncan recalled, had belonged to the Club always. He was a singularly cold person, appearing invariably alone and speaking to no one. His very presence was irritating to most of the club members, for Mr. Blodgett carried with him at all times an air of frigid rectitude.

Now Duncan grinned as he realized that he had "something on" the frozen saint.

"Hello there, Blodgett!" he called, pointing an accusing finger. "What are *you* doing here?"

"I am here," replied Mr. Blodgett, looking at Duncan with eyes of ice, "for the very good reason that I live here."

Mr. Duncan was convulsed. "Well, that's rich! You live *here?* I never would have dreamed it!" He laughed uproariously. "You never can tell. It shows you're a human being, after all."

"This is my house, Mr. Duncan. The lady you have been talking to is my daughter. Come, I will introduce you to my wife."

He took Duncan by the hand and led him into the drawing-room.

Here a strange sight met their gaze. The fat woman was listening to Mr. Webster's bass rumble with horror-stricken, though fascinated, eyes. On the other side of the room Mr. Lee was on his knees before a convulsed young woman, imploring her to marry him then and there. At her side sat Mr. Burke, whispering sweet nothings into her pink ear. The Doctor was at the piano, picking out chords and clamouring for a drink, and on a chair in the corner Mr. Hooper was snoring fitfully.

Blodgett's lean and ironic jaws snapped. "These are gentlemen I have invited to the party. They have, I may say, somewhat peculiar ideas of a joke. Yet we have enjoyed it—hugely. Now we will dance."

But Mr. Duncan, the truth finally penetrating his befuddled brain, was in no humour for dancing.

He walked across the room and kicked the snoring Mr. Hooper on the shins.

"Wake up!" he hissed. "We've got into the wrong place."

"Come, gentlemen," urged the host, with a ghastly laugh, "on with the dance!"

Mr. Lee, sensing the situation, rose to his feet and fled, closely followed by Mr. Burke. Doc Clark was edging toward the door, dragging the protesting Mr. Hooper after him, while Duncan offered explanation.

"Sorry, but we can't stay," he said, gesturing wildly in the direction in which his friends had disappeared. "We just dropped in for a minute—to tell you we can't come. Fact is, important business engagements make it impossible"—he felt Mr. Blodgett's hand on his shoulder blades pushing him toward the door—"to attend. It's extremely unfortunate."

"We all regret it very much," said Mr. Blodgett smoothly, at the same time applying more force on Mr. Duncan's shoulder blades. "The ladies will be greatly disappointed."

He followed them out on the veranda and closed the door behind him.

"Now," he said, whirling Duncan around, "get the hell out of here!"

And with this he let fly a kick that catapulted that gentleman into the others at the top of the steps, and they all went down together. After them Blodgett hurled with deadly accuracy a half-dozen flower-pots.

He gazed at his work of devastation for a moment and then, humming an air, he went inside.

* * * * *

Doc Clark administered first aid, and, with Mr. Webster's assistance, got them loaded in the taxi. Sweeney, who had safely watched the massacre from a ring-side seat, cranked the car and they started back to the city.

They rode in silence for a time, and then Mr. Lee, rubbing his numerous bruises, spoke.

He said:

"To hell with the belle of New Orleans!"

SHADOW-HOUR

By George O'Neil

THERE is so strange a stillness as you lie
Hushed in the darkness . . . and the lilies near,
Catching the moonlight in their curving hands,
Diffuse its pallor on your half-turned face . . .

There is no lift of air to move their scent . . .
They cloud about the casement, motionless . . .
And breathless as the lilies and the night,
Loving your shadowed peacefulness—am I. . . .

GARMENTS

By Blanche Shoemaker Wagstaff

YOUTH is slipping from me . . .
Like a golden garment a girl slips slowly from her cool body.

Daily I see the changes . . .
Changes like the sky when autumn comes and twilight quickens suddenly.

There is silver in my hair . . .
Hair that was tawny and shimmering like meadow grass stroked by sunlight.

My laughter no longer has the same ring . . .
The old, girlhood ring that rippled before Sorrow stooped to me.

Nor is my body firm and supple . . .
Supple as a lad's it used to be, and there was lustre in the flesh, and muscle.

Youth is slipping from me . . .
Like a golden garment a girl slips slowly from her cool body. . . .

AVAUNT!

By June Gibson and John Hamilton

I

I AM tiring of Paul . . .
I shall hint to Paul that I wish to get married.

II

I am tiring of Paula . . .
I shall hint to Paula that I never intend to get married.

PHILOSOPHERS

A SATIRICAL PLAY IN ONE ACT

By Morris Colman

CHARACTERS:

BENNETT—*A Man of Thirty*
CARNEY—*A Man of Fifty*
LUCY—*A Woman of Thirty*

BEFORE you is the backyard of an apartment house in a large city. It is late summer. The time is three o'clock in the morning. On the left you notice dimly a corner of the rear of the block. It is in antique finish. From the corner runs a dilapidated board fence, forming the second side of a triangular space. You view it from the hypotenuse. In the foreground lays an indistinct confused mess of broken barrels, packing cases, pieces of wood, aged tin cans and everything which forms the mise en scene of the modern tenement rear.

Bluish light is the illuminant, with amber moonlight from the right casting greenish highlights, in contrast with the deep tone of the shadows.

As the curtain rises, BENNETT *may be noticed, seated on a packing case in the middle of the litter, back to the house. He is clean shaven, black haired, carelessly dressed, hatless. In his hands is a nickel-plated revolver, which he is fingering.*

He looks intently at the revolver, then at the skyline. He takes a deep breath, but without emotion. He pulls out a watch, looks at it, replaces it in his pocket, whistles a few bars from some opera.

CARNEY *enters through a gap in the fence. In the weak light he is seen to have grey hair and moustache, and an apparently deeply wrinkled face. He wears old and patched garments. He is carrying a rough sack. He does not notice* BENNETT *at first. This person is looking at him with curiosity.* CARNEY *stoops, picks up an empty whisky bottle, which he drops into the sack. He has turned and almost faces* BENNETT *when he notices him.*

CARNEY *immediately drops his bag, and stands as though paralyzed for a moment.*

BENNETT

What's the matter?

CARNEY

(*Regaining his composure.*) Look out!

BENNETT

What for?

CARNEY

That gun!

BENNETT

(*Still calmly.*) Oh, the gun! You needn't worry. It's just to kill myself.

CARNEY

Good God, what for? You had me scared. (*He takes off his hat, which*

drops out of his trembling hands to the ground. He draws out a handkerchief and wipes his brow. He does not pick up the hat.)

BENNETT

(*Just as calmly.*) I'm going to kill myself because truth is so ugly.

CARNEY

Because *what?*

BENNETT

(*Gazing abstractedly ahead.*) Because nothing is beautiful but what is false, and reality is too insistent for me to escape it.

CARNEY

What's all this? Are you crazy?

BENNETT

I never was more rational in my life.

CARNEY

You said you were going to kill yourself.

BENNETT

(*Nonchalantly.*) Well?

CARNEY

(*Draws up a packing-case and sits down, facing* BENNETT.) But you must not think of such a thing. It's sin.

BENNETT

It's sin, eh? What is sin?

CARNEY

You know very well what sin is. Sin is anything wrong.

BENNETT

Well, there's nothing wrong about this, is there?

CARNEY

Wrong? Young man, it's criminal. It is an insult to your Maker, it's loathsome, it's contemptible, it's cowardly. . . . I wish I had words to tell you how I feel about it.

BENNETT

You do? You're assuming a lot, are you not? What right have you to say all this? I tell you your term sin is too relative. Sin is anything fifty-one per cent. of the people would like to do but don't dare to. I can do what I like with my own, and you can go to hell! (*Calming suddenly.*) You see the night? It is beautiful. (*With a sweeping gesture, revolver in hand, he indicates the sky.*) Why is it beautiful?

CARNEY

(*Contemplates the sky from horizon to horizon, then speaks.*) Yes, it is beautiful. I had not noticed it. It is one of God's most magnificent works. . . .

BENNETT

(*Interrupting.*) God? I'll tell you why the night is beautiful. It is beautiful because it hides. It covers up the ugly details. It deceives. It does not show up the truth. You see endless semi-darkness, filled with indistinct figures which charm because you do not know what they are. All the ugliness is shadowed over. That is what makes it magnificent.

CARNEY

(*Still distressed at the thought of* BENNETT'S *contemplated demise.*) But, in God's name, what has the night to do with your killing yourself?

BENNETT

(*With nonchalance.*) Because as soon as dawn comes, just before it is light enough for reality, I'm going to blow out my brains.

CARNEY

But why, my friend?

BENNETT

I told you once. Because there is so little beauty in the world that I cannot be happy.

CARNEY

A coward, eh?

BENNETT

(*Smiling.*) If you call going from a place one dislikes to another more agreeable cowardice, yes.

CARNEY

It is a pretty cheap way to win a battle.

BENNETT

No. It is a luxury few men can afford.

CARNEY

And you are running away from what?

BENNETT

Everything. It is so terribly ugly.

CARNEY

(*Leaning back, hands on knees, speaking gently.*) Come now, young man, don't be foolish. There is much in life that is beautiful. I'm old enough to be your father. I believe in God and earn my modest living, and I am happy.

BENNETT

(*With a pitying smile.*) You are happy because you believe a myth. If I could believe it, I would be happy also.

CARNEY

(*Almost shouting.*) Myth?

BENNETT

Yes. That is why it is a good religion.

CARNEY

(*Open-mouthed.*) I don't understand you.

BENNETT

Religion was not made because men needed something to worship, but because the rabble is ready to believe anything someone apparently better informed tells it. Men are frightened by reality, and crave something to believe which will convince them there is more to life than they see. Those who were capable of thinking provided this, called it religion and declared themselves inspired, and secured an easy living for themselves.

CARNEY

But Christianity, at least, is truth.

BENNETT

It would never do for the common people to know the truth. They are too sentimental. Those who founded religions play on men's fears, on their responsiveness to impressions, on their loves. That is how they preserve law and order, maintain the upper hand, and make themselves weathy. Religions are the proof of the masses' subjection to the small aristocracy of the intelligent. Why, I tell you, if the mass could reason—if ever it learned the truth—everyone would seek dreams in drugs, carelessness in cups and newness in forgetting—then do what I am going to do—get out of the world.

CARNEY

(*Who has been nonplussed temporarily by this heresy.*) My dear friend, you do not understand. Your heart is blinded to God's truth. The Lord giveth happiness to him who hath faith. Whatever your hardships in this life, we know there will be happiness in the hereafter. Faith is the great comforter.

BENNETT

I am sorry you came. A man's illusions are his only happiness, and he is the only damned who shatters them, for once shattered, they can never be reinstalled.

CARNEY

You can never shake my faith with your heresies.

BENNETT

(*Warming to the discussion.*) Faith! Faith is that with which you deceive yourself. It is the premise of every religion and the mark of servitude to the intelligent. You are proving my own argument. Without faith you could not be happy. And the man who thinks cannot believe.

CARNEY

By faith men can move mountains.

BENNETT

Yes, and history tells us that by faith men killed others who had faith enough

to believe they were being killed to their own glory. And those who engendered this faith laughed. (*Vehemently.*) Faith! The most beautiful attribute of the child, the most pitiful admission of the man. The greatest blessing and the greatest curse, the most potent weapon in the world! If only I could use it! But the trouble would be I could not stand the sight of its slaves.

CARNEY

(*Shaking his head.*) My boy, my boy, take care. You are speaking of something of which you know nothing. If you refuse faith, no heavenly power can help you.

BENNETT

(*With a sneer.*) Heavenly power!

(LUCY *enters. She emerges from a back door of the tenement-house. She is a woman of no particular allure, but from what one can see in the semi-darkness, not ugly. She appears to be a hard-working woman. She is dressed for the street, and is on her way to the business section of the city, where she scrubs out offices before their occupants arrive each morning.* BENNETT *and* CARNEY *do not notice her arrival. As she walks toward the back of the yard she notices them. Then she catches sight of the revolver in* BENNET'S *hands. She screams.*)

BENNETT AND CARNEY

(*Rising and taking a step toward her, together.*) What's the matter?

LUCY

(*Wide-eyed.*) Don't shoot him!

BENNETT

(*Reassuringly.*) Oh! Never mind me, madam. I'm not going to shoot him.

LUCY

(*Still terror-stricken.*) Yes, you are. What have you got that gun for?

BENNETT

(*Smiling.*) I'm going to shoot myself.

LUCY

(*Still excited.*) No, you're not.

BENNETT

Certainly I am.

LUCY

Shoot yourself! (*Calming a little.*) What's the matter? Are you broke?

BENNETT

No.

LUCY

You've got enough cash, and you're going to shoot yourself! (*Turning to* CARNEY.) He's not going to shoot himself, is he?

CARNEY

That is what he says, but I have been trying to prevent him.

(*To* BENNETT.) You must be crazy.

BENNETT

(*Smiling.*) I may have a good reason.

LUCY

Are the police after you? I had a cousin once, he killed himself because they were going to arrest him.

BENNETT

No. You could not understand my reasons, anyhow—so please leave us alone.

LUCY

I think he must have been crazy. He would probably have been sent up for a long time, maybe for life. But I say, all the better. There's no more worry, you don't have to be wondering every day how you're going to feed the kids and pay the rent and keep respectable yourself.

BENNETT

How interesting!

CARNEY

I have just been trying to convince this deluded man of something similar. While there is life and love, there is hope. (*Turning to* BENNETT.) There

are other things to make one wish for life besides faith. There is love. . . .

Yes, haven't you got any consideration for your people? Is there nobody depending on you? Haven't you got a girl who'll care when you're gone?

BENNETT

(*A little impatient.*) No.

CARNEY

Have you no experience of love?

BENNETT

(*Warming up to his theme, speaking bitterly; as he speaks, he drops the gun from forgetful fingers.*) Yes, I've tried love. It did me well for quite a time. I was happy then. There was a woman with big grey eyes who sometimes petted me and sometimes came to me to be petted. It appealed to my vanity. Then she began to take too much interest in me. I tried. There were other women. I've loved them madly, one after the other. Then they began to love me—and it ended. I know it always will end. What is the use in trying again what I know will finish unpleasantly? The zest is only in the chase, and unfortunately I know it. There must be a colour of eternity in happiness, or else it is an unsatisfying tone.

LUCY

Well, why don't you get busy and do something? I never saw anybody who had some work to do who spent his time thinking up foolish dope like that—not love, nor suicides, either. You've got too many ideas and not enough to do.

CARNEY

(*With some emotion.*) I am sorry for you, my boy. But love is not all there is in life. Our friend has told us a great truth. Achievement, that is joy. To do something, make something, find something after a search, that is the real beauty of life.

BENNETT

And after you've done it, or found it, or made it, start right in again trying to do or make or find something else, and so on, until you die.

LUCY

Well, we folks are never going to get anything better, anyway, so we might just as well. Besides, we've got to keep fed. (*As she says this, she becomes more and more serious, as though she had started a strange train of thoughts in her mind.*)

CARNEY

Work is what keeps me happy. I have a book in my little room, on which I am working. I have worked on it for years. It is my child, my joy. Making it grow and perfecting it gives me the keenest delight. It keeps me poor following my ambition to finish it, but, young man, it is worth it, it is worth it. You see, I am, in my way, a philosopher.

BENNETT

(*Scornfully.*) Yes, you are right. You are a philosopher. The difference between a philosopher and a thinker is that one deals in illusions, the other in facts. The philosopher finds a belief and calls it truth, while the thinker finds the truth and makes it his belief.

(*A very gradual increase of red light above indicates the approach of dawn.*)

LUCY

(*Abstractedly.*) I never had time to think up ideas like that. I'm too busy earning three squares a day for me and the kids.

CARNEY

(*To* BENNETT.) But achievement, my friend, achievement!

BENNETT

(*In a tone which implies he is condescending to convince this man of his errors of thought.*) Yes, achievement, creation. Why, the creator is the most unhappy man of all. I sometimes wonder why God does not get out of patience and end himself, too.

CARNEY

(*Sententiously.*) The creator is omniscient.

BENNETT

Yes, the creator knows everything. He knows how his greatest work is done. He is the slave of reality. He never can have any illusions. He is intimate with every detail of his work, he knows each one of its slightest imperfections. What enchants his admirers evokes in him nothing but criticism. They do not know its faults, they were not there at its birth. The most accomplished musician can never enjoy the piece he plays, because he knows how it should be played. The painter of greatest skill sees the flaws in his canvas. To be an ignorant admirer, that is bliss. To be admired is to despise.

LUCY

Well, you seem to get a lot of fun out of telling your strange ideas. What'll you do when you're dead and haven't got any ideas?

CARNEY

Yes, even in cynicism there is an unholy joy.

BENNETT

(*Bitterly.*) A cynic is a sentimentalist with a sense of humour. He gives up all else for his humour, and if it is not sufficient to buoy him up always, he is the most pitiful of mortals. Cynicism also is discovery, and discovery is next to creation. And if you tell me of destruction I'll tell you it also is akin to creation. Destruction exhilarates, but after it comes remorse, because the result of destruction is not beautiful. (*With enthusiasm.*) No, self-destruction is the only perfect form of creation, because after it there can be no regrets, for there is nothing.

LUCY

(*Who has listened to this speech with close attention.*) If you mean being dead, maybe so. I guess there can't be much grief among the dead.

CARNEY

But man's soul lives and suffers.

BENNETT

(*As* LUCY *listens intently, trying to understand.*) That soul stuff is all vanity. It is a manifestation of the instinct of self-preservation. The only difference between a man and an animal is man's power of imagination. You can trace every point of man's superiority to the fact that he can grasp the abstract.

LUCY

You mean that a horse sees only what is, while a man can see what ain't!

CARNEY

Stop this irreverence. There is eternity for remorse.

BENNETT

(*Leaning forward, pointing a slender finger at* CARNEY, *transfixing him with his gaze,* LUCY *following attentively his words.*) There is no eternity. I have never found any evidence of it. I have found much evidence against it.

CARNEY

What evidence?

BENNETT

I fail to see what purpose God would have, for instance, in giving you eternity in which to live your puny, petty life, in the bosom of reality and bound to discover it some day. I can't find anything in me that is worth either the gift or the curse. If I could believe it, I would be happy. It is the most beautiful of fallacies. (*He drops his finger, convinced he has won his point.*) I would be happy until I died, and as there is no after life, I would never find out my mistake.

LUCY

You've got the right idea, Mr. . . . ?

BENNETT

Bennett.

LUCY

You've got the right idea, Mr. Bennett (*To* CARNEY.) I never figured it out like Mr. Bennett has, but I never

believed there was anything in this after death stuff. Life is too tough for anybody to want it to last for ever.

CARNEY

(*Still gravely.*) In the after life, we shall be perfected.

BENNETT

(*Surprised that* CARNEY *is trying to convince him still.*) Perfected? There is no perfection. No one is perfect. How can you or I become perfect? The only perfect thing is the grave, because when one is in it, one cannot see its faults.

(*Slowly increasing amber light indicates that dawn is very near.*)

LUCY

(*To herself.*) And you can't see nothing nor think nothing nor know nothing. No more work every day all day, no more scrambling for money, no more nothing. Gee!

CARNEY

(*Catching at a last argument.*) You love beauty. The world is full of beauty, if only you will look for it. The flowers, the trees, human kindness, children, music—all that is beautiful. Live for beauty, my friend, don't die for it.

BENNETT

(LUCY, *who has paid little attention to* CARNEY, *looks intently at* BENNETT *as he speaks, her brows knitted, trying to get each word.*) No. In death I'll find the greatest beauty. I will take to my bosom eternal unreality. I never will be able to know the tragic truth, because I will shut it out with all the world's temporary beauty in oblivion.

LUCY

(*Still to herself, receiving no attention from the two arguing men.*) Beauty! I'll say so. Nothing more to worry about, nothing more to fight for, nothing more to be afraid of. That would be happiness. And I never knew it! I'd never need to work, and I'd never need to eat, and there wouldn't be any pain or worry, it wouldn't matter when we were broke. . . .

BENNETT

(*With enthusiasm.*) Yes, the grave is perfect beauty, with none of the world's backyards, none of its hates and petty jealousies and mean little fights and treachery, none of its dirt and its remorse, its aimless ambitions and ephemeral pleasures . . .

(LUCY *stoops swiftly, picks up the revolver from* BENNETT'S *feet, places it to her head.*)

BENNETT

What are you doing? (*With a swift movement he catches her arm, pulls her wrist down. He struggles with her a moment, catches the gun and wrenches it from her hand and throws it on the ground again, on the other side of* CARNEY, *who has stood surprised into inactivity during the brief struggle.*) What do you mean? Are you crazy? Get away! (*He turns to* CARNEY, *resuming his speech, while* LUCY *stands by, arms down, with the face of a spanked child.*) Free from the horror of people, away from everything, with no imperfections to madden you . . . that is happiness . . .

CARNEY

(*Wearied of argument.*) Your philosophy is full of imperfections.

BENNETT

(*Eagerly.*) Of course it is. Yet it is the most unassailable of philosophies, because its premise is that everything is full of imperfections. Now we agree.

CARNEY

(*Disgusted.*) Agree? We do not. What is more, young man, your philosophy is not only imperfect, it is utterly false.

BENNETT

(*A happy light in his eyes, smiling.*) I know it is. That is the beauty of it. Don't you see . . . (*As he is speaking,* CARNEY *rises, stoops, picks up the revolver. An increase of light shows dawn has come.*)

CARNEY

You're crazy. I have no more time to waste with you. Here. It is dawn. Go ahead. Kill yourself. (*He thrusts the revolver into* BENNETT'S *hands, turns, picks up his sack and starts towards the hole in the fence through which he came.*)

BENNETT

(*Paying no attention to the revolver, which falls from his hands as he rises and follows* CARNEY, *his hand outstretched argumentatively.*) Wait, wait! I'll show you the beauty of my philosophy if it takes me . . . Wait!

(CARNEY *has disappeared through the fence.* BENNETT *follows, still arguing.*)

LUCY

(*Recovering from the motionless astonishment of the events since she picked up the revolver.*) Well, can you beat that? (*Suddenly realizing she has lost much time, and will be late for work, sighs and turns towards the back of the yard. Her eyes catch the glint of the revolver. She stoops and picks it up.*) I might be able to sell that. (*She sighs.*) Oh, hell! (*She starts toward the back of the yard as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.)

TOURING HELL

By Helen Drake

SHE was flabby-necked, wide bosomed, lank-limbed—
Very, very plain.
He was tall and blond and olive-skinned and carefully groomed—
Very, very handsome.
He was to meet her at four.
He was five minutes late.
During those five minutes she toured Hell.

EVEN more absurd than the notion that because a man comes home with a blonde hair on his shoulder he has been engaged in amour, is the notion that because a man does not come home with a blonde hair on his shoulder he has not been engaged in amour.

THE trouble with women is that every successive romance leaves them more romantic.

HER BOSS

By Willa Sibert Cather

PAUL WANNING opened the front door of his house in Orange, closed it softly behind him, and stood looking about the hall as he drew off his gloves.

Nothing was changed there since last night, and yet he stood gazing about him with an interest which a long-married man does not often feel in his own reception hall. The rugs, the two pillars, the Spanish tapestry chairs, were all the same. The Venus di Medici stood on her column as usual and there, at the end of the hall (opposite the front door), was the full-length portrait of Mrs. Wanning, maturely blooming forth in an evening gown, signed with the name of a French painter who seemed purposely to have made his signature indistinct. Though the signature was largely what one paid for, one couldn't ask him to do it over.

In the dining room the coloured man was moving about the table set for dinner, under the electric cluster. The candles had not yet been lighted. Wanning watched him with a homesick feeling in his heart. They had had Sam a long while, twelve years, now. His warm hall, the lighted dining room, the drawing room where only the flicker of the wood fire played upon the shining surfaces of many objects—they seemed to Wanning like a haven of refuge. It had never occurred to him that his house was too full of things. He often said, and he believed, that the women of his household had "perfect taste." He had paid for these objects, sometimes with difficulty, but always with pride. He carried a heavy life-insurance and permitted himself to spend most of the income from a good law practice. He wished, during his lifetime, to enjoy the benefits of his wife's discriminating extravagance.

Yesterday Wanning's doctor had sent him to a specialist. To-day the specialist, after various laboratory tests, had told him most disconcerting things about the state of very necessary, but hitherto wholly uninteresting, organs of his body.

The information pointed to something incredible; insinuated that his residence in this house was only temporary; that he, whose time was so full, might have to leave not only his house and his office and his club, but a world with which he was extremely well satisfied—the only world he knew anything about.

Wanning unbuttoned his overcoat, but did not take it off. He stood folding his muffler slowly and carefully. What he did not understand was, how he could go while other people stayed. Sam would be moving about the table like this, Mrs. Wanning and her daughters would be dressing upstairs, when he would not be coming home to dinner any more; when he would not, indeed, be dining anywhere.

Sam, coming to turn on the parlour lights, saw Wanning and stepped behind him to take his coat.

"Good evening, Mr. Wanning, sah, excuse me. You entahed so quietly, sah, I didn't heah you."

The master of the house slipped out of his coat and went languidly upstairs.

He tapped at the door of his wife's room, which stood ajar.

"Come in, Paul," she called from her dressing table.

She was seated, in a violet dressing gown, giving the last touches to her coiffure, both arms lifted. They were firm and white, like her neck and shoulders. She was a handsome woman of fifty-five—still a woman, not an old person, Wanning told himself, as he kissed her cheek. She was heavy in figure, to be sure, but she had kept, on the whole, presentable outlines. Her complexion was good, and she wore less false hair than either of her daughters.

Wanning himself was five years older, but his sandy hair did not show the grey in it, and since his moustache had begun to grow white he kept it clipped so short that it was unobtrusive. His fresh skin made him look younger than he was. Not long ago he had overheard the stenographers in his law office discussing the ages of their employers. They had put him down at fifty, agreeing that his two partners must be considerably older than he—which was not the case. Wanning had an especially kindly feeling for the little new girl, a copyist, who had exclaimed that "Mr. Wanning couldn't be fifty; he seemed so boyish!"

Wanning lingered behind his wife, looking at her in the mirror.

"Well, did you tell the girls, Julia?" he asked, trying to speak casually.

Mrs. Wanning looked up and met his eyes in the glass. "The girls?"

She noticed a strange expression come over his face.

"About your health, you mean? Yes, dear, but I tried not to alarm them. They feel dreadfully. I'm going to have a talk with Dr. Seares myself. These specialists are all alarmists, and I've often heard of his frightening people."

She rose and took her husband's arm, drawing him toward the fireplace.

"You are not going to let this upset you, Paul? If you take care of yourself, everything will come out all right. You have always been so strong. One has only to look at you."

"Did you," Wanning asked, "say anything to Harold?"

"Yes, of course. I saw him in town to-day, and he agrees with me that Seares draws the worst conclusions possible. He says even the young men are always being told the most terrifying things. Usually they laugh at the doctors and do as they please. You certainly don't look like a sick man, and you don't feel like one, do you?"

She patted his shoulder, smiled at him encouragingly, and rang for the maid to come and hook her dress.

When the maid appeared at the door, Wanning went out through the bathroom to his own sleeping chamber. He was too much dispirited to put on a dinner coat, though such remissness was always noticed. He sat down and waited for the sound of the gong, leaving his door open, on the chance that perhaps one of his daughters would come in.

When Wanning went down to dinner he found his wife already at her chair, and the table laid for four.

"Harold," she explained, "is not coming home. He has to attend a first night in town.

A moment later their two daughters entered, obviously "dressed." They both wore earrings and masses of hair. The daughters' names were Roma and Florence—Roma, Firenze, one of the young men who came to the house often, but not often enough, had called them. To-night they were going to a rehearsal of "The Dances of the Nations"—a benefit performance in which Miss Roma was to lead the Spanish dances, her sister the Grecian.

The elder daughter had often been told that her name suited her admirably. She looked, indeed, as we are apt to think the unrestrained beauties of later Rome must have looked—but as their portrait busts emphatically declare they did not. Her head was massive, her lips full and crimson, her eyes large and heavy-lidded, her forehead low. At costume balls and in living pictures she was always Semiramis, or Poppea, or Theodora. Barbaric accessories brought out something cruel and even rather brutal in her handsome

face. The men who were attracted to her were somehow afraid of her.

Florence was slender, with a long, graceful neck, a restless head, and a flexible mouth — discontent lurked about the corners of it. Her shoulders were pretty, but her neck and arms were too thin. Roma was always struggling to keep within a certain weight—her chin and upper arms grew persistently more solid—and Florence was always striving to attain a certain weight. Wanning used sometimes to wonder why these disconcerting fluctuations could not go the other way; why Roma could not melt away as easily as did her sister, who had to be sent to Palm Beach to save the precious pounds.

"I don't see why you ever put Rickie Allen in charge of the English country dances," Florence said to her sister, as they sat down. "He knows the figures, of course, but he has no real style."

Roma looked annoyed. Rickie Allen was one of the men who came to the house almost often enough.

"He is absolutely to be depended upon, that's why," she said firmly.

"I think he is just right for it, Florence," put in Mrs. Wanning. "It's remarkable he should feel that he can give up the time; such a busy man. He must be very much interested in the movement."

Florence's lip curled drolly under her soup spoon. She shot an amused glance at her mother's dignity.

"Nothing doing," her keen eyes seemed to say.

Though Florence was nearly thirty and her sister a little beyond, there was, seriously, nothing doing. With so many charms and so much preparation, they never, as Florence vulgarly said, quite pulled it off. They had been rushed, time and again, and Mrs. Wanning had repeatedly steeled herself to bear the blow. But the young men went to follow a career in Mexico or the Philippines, or movel to Yonkers, and escaped without a mortal wound.

Roma turned graciously to her father.

"I met Mr. Lane at the Holland House to-day, where I was lunching with the Burtons, father. He asked about you, and when I told him you were not so well as usual, he said he would call you up. He wants to tell you about some doctor he discovered in Iowa, who cures everything with massage and hot water. It sounds freakish, but Mr. Lane is a very clever man, isn't he?"

"Very," assented Wanning.

"I should think he must be!" sighed Mrs. Wanning. "How in the world did he make all that money, Paul? He didn't seem especially promising years ago, when we used to see so much of them."

"Corporation business. He's attorney for the P. L. and G.," murmured her husband.

"What a pile he must have!" Florence watched the old negro's slow movements with restless eyes. "Here is Jenny, a Contessa, with a glorious palace in Genoa that her father must have bought her. Surely Aldrini had nothing. Have you seen the baby count's pictures, Roma? They're very cunning. I should think you'd go to Genoa and visit Jenny."

"We must arrange that, Roma. It's such an opportunity." Though Mrs. Wanning addressed her daughter, she looked at her husband. "You would get on so well among their friends. When Count Aldrini was here you spoke Italian much better than poor Jenny. I remember when we entertained him, he could scarcely say anything to her at all.

Florence tried to call up an answering flicker of amusement upon her sister's calm, well-bred face. She thought her mother was rather outdoing herself to-night—since Aldrini had at least managed to say the one important thing to Jenny, somehow, somewhere. Jenny Lane had been Roma's friend and schoolmate, and the Count was an ephemeral hope in Orange. Mrs. Wanning was one of the first matrons to declare that she had no prejudices against foreigners, and at the dinners

that were given for the Count, Roma was always put next him to act as interpreter.

Roma again turned to her father.

"If I were you, dear, I would let Mr. Lane tell me about his doctor. New discoveries are often made by queer people."

Roma's voice was low and sympathetic; she never lost her dignity.

Florence asked if she might have her coffee in her room, while she dashed off a note, and she ran upstairs humming "Bright Lights" and wondering how she was going to stand her family until the summer scattering. Why could Roma never throw off her elegant reserve and call things by their names? She sometimes thought she might like her sister, if she would only come out in the open and howl about her disappointments.

Roma, drinking her coffee deliberately, asked her father if they might have the car early, as they wanted to pick up Mr. Allen and Mr. Rydberg on their way to rehearsal.

Wanning said certainly. Heaven knew he was not stingy about his car, though he could never quite forget that in his day it was the young men who used to call for the girls when they went to rehearsals.

"You are going with us, Mother?" Roma asked as they rose.

"I think so, dear. Your father will want to go to bed early, and I shall sleep better if I go out. I am going to town to-morrow to pour tea for Harold. We must get him some new silver, Paul. I am quite ashamed of his spoons."

Harold, the only son, was a playwright—as yet "unproduced" and he had a studio in Washington Square.

A half-hour later, Wanning was alone in his library. He would not permit himself to feel aggrieved. What was more commendable than a mother's interest in her children's pleasures? Moreover, it was his wife's way of following things up, of never letting the grass grow under her feet, that had helped to push him along in the world. She was more ambitious than he—that had been good for him. He was naturally indolent, and Julia's childlike desire to possess material objects, to buy what other people were buying, had been the spur that made him go after business. It had, moreover, made his house the attractive place he believed it to be.

"Suppose," his wife sometimes said to him when the bills came in from Céleste or Mme. Blanche, "suppose you had plain daughters; how would you like that?"

He wouldn't have liked it. When he went anywhere with his three ladies, Wanning always felt very well done by. He had no complaint to make about them, or about anything. That was why it seemed so unreasonable—He felt along his back incredulously with his hand. Harold, of course, was a trial; but among all his business friends, he knew scarcely one who had a promising boy.

The house was so still that Wanning could hear a faint, metallic tinkle from the butler's pantry. Old Sam was washing up the silver, which he put away himself every night.

Wanning rose and walked aimlessly down the hall and out through the dining-room.

"Any Apollinaris on ice, Sam? I'm not feeling very well to-night."

The old coloured man dried his hands.

"Yessah, Mistah Wanning. Have a little rye with it, sah?"

"No, thank you, Sam. That's one of the things I can't do any more. I've been to see a big doctor in the city, and he tells me there's something seriously wrong with me. My kidneys have sort of gone back on me."

It was a satisfaction to Wanning to name the organ that had betrayed him, while all the rest of him was so sound.

Sam was immediately interested. He shook his grizzled head and looked full of wisdom.

"Don't seem like a gen'leman of such a temperate life ought to have anything wrong thar, sah."

"No, it doesn't, does it?"

Wanning leaned against the china closet and talked to Sam for nearly half an hour. The specialist who condemned him hadn't seemed half so much interested. There was not a detail about the examination and the laboratory tests in which Sam did not show the deepest concern. He kept asking Wanning if he could remember "straining himself" when he was a young man.

"I've knowed a strain like that to sleep in a man for yeahs and yeahs, and then come back on him, 'deed I have," he said, mysteriously. "An' again, it might be you got a floatin' kidney, sah. Aftah dey once teah loose, dey sometimes don't make no trouble for quite a while."

When Wanning went to his room he did not go to bed. He sat up until he heard the voices of his wife and daughters in the hall below. His own bed somehow frightened him. In all the years he had lived in this house he had never before looked about his room, at that bed, with the thought that he might one day be trapped there, and might not get out again. He had been ill, of course, but his room had seemed a particularly pleasant place for a sick man; sunlight, flowers—agreeable, well-dressed women coming in and out.

Now there was something sinister about the bed itself, about its position, and its relation to the rest of the furniture.

II

THE next morning, on his way downtown, Wanning got off the subway train at Astor Place and walked over to Washington Square. He climbed three flights of stairs and knocked at his son's studio. Harold, dressed, with his stick and gloves in his hand, opened the door. He was just going over to the Brevoort for breakfast. He greeted his father with the cordial familiarity practised by all the "boys" of his set, clapped him on the shoulder and said in his light, tonsilitis voice:

"Come in, Governor, how delightful! I haven't had a call from you in a long time."

He threw his hat and gloves on the writing table. He was a perfect gentleman, even with his father.

Florence said the matter with Harold was that he had heard people say he looked like Byron, and stood for it.

What Harold would stand for in such matters was, indeed, the best definition of him. When he read his play "The Street Walker" in drawing rooms and one lady told him it had the poetic symbolism of Tchekhov, and another said that it suggested the biting realism of Brieux, he never, in his most secret thoughts, questioned the acumen of either lady. Harold's speech, even if you heard it in the next room and could not see him, told you that he had no sense of the absurd—a throaty staccato, with never a downward inflection, trustfully striving to please.

"Just going out?" his father asked. I won't keep you. Your mother told you I had a discouraging session with Seares?"

"So awfully sorry you've had this bother, Governor; just as sorry as I can be. No question about it's coming out all right, but it's a downright nuisance, your having to diet and that sort of thing. And I suppose you ought to follow directions, just to make us all feel comfortable, oughtn't you?" Harold spoke with fluent sympathy.

Wanning sat down on the arm of a chair and shook his head. "Yes, they do recommend a diet, but they don't promise much from it."

Harold laughed precipitately. "Delicious! All doctors are, aren't they? So profound and oracular! The medicine-man; it's quite the same idea, you see; with tom-toms."

Wanning knew that Harold meant something subtle—one of the subtleties which he said were only spoiled by being explained—so he came bluntly to one of the issues he had in mind.

"I would like to see you settled before I quit the harness, Harold."

Harold was absolutely tolerant.

He took out his cigarette case and burnished it with his handkerchief.

"I perfectly understand your point of view, dear Governor, but perhaps you don't altogether get mine. Isn't it so? I am settled. What you mean by being settled, would unsettle me, completely. I'm cut out for just such an existence as this; to live four floors up in an attic, get my own breakfast, and have a charwoman to do for me. I should be awfully bored with an establishment. I'm quite content with a little diggings like this."

Wanning's eyes fell. Somebody had to pay the rent of even such modest quarters as contented Harold, but to say so would be rude, and Harold himself was never rude. Wanning did not, this morning, feel equal to hearing a statement of his son's uncommercial ideals.

"I know," he said hastily. "But now we're up against hard facts, my boy. I did not want to alarm your mother, but I've had a time limit put on me, and it's not a very long one."

Harold threw away the cigarette he had just lighted in a burst of indignation.

"That's the sort of thing I consider criminal, Father, absolutely criminal! What doctor has a right to suggest such a thing? Seares himself may be knocked out to-morrow. What have laboratory tests got to do with a man's will to live? The force of that depends upon his entire personality, not on any organ or pair of organs."

Harold thrust his hands in his pockets and walked up and down, very much stirred. "Really, I have a very poor opinion of scientists. They ought to be made serve an apprenticeship in art, to get some conception of the power of human motives. Such brutality!"

Harold's plays dealt with the grimmest and most depressing matters, but he himself was always agreeable, and he insisted upon high cheerfulness as the correct tone of human intercourse.

Wanning rose and turned to go. There was, in Harold, simply no reality, to which one could break through. The young man took up his hat and gloves.

"Must you go? Let me step along with you to the sub. The walk will do me good."

Harold talked agreeably all the way to Astor Place. His father heard little of what he said, but he rather liked his company and his wish to be pleasant.

Wanning went to his club for luncheon, meaning to spend the afternoon with some of his friends who had retired from business and who read the papers there in the empty hours between two and seven. He got no satisfaction, however. When he tried to tell these men of his present predicament, they began to describe ills of their own in which he could not feel interested. Each one of them had a treacherous organ of which he spoke with animation, almost with pride, as if it were a crafty business competitor whom he was constantly outwitting. Each had a doctor, too, for whom he was ardently soliciting business. They wanted either to telephone their doctor and make an appointment for Wanning, or to take him then and there to the consulting room. When he did not accept these invitations, they lost interest in him and remembered engagements. He called a taxi and returned to the offices of McQuiston, Wade and Wanning.

Settled at his desk, Wanning decided that he would not go home to dinner, but would stay at the office and dictate a long letter to an old college friend who lived in Wyoming. He could tell Douglas Brown things that he had not succeeded in getting to any one else. Brown, out in the Wind River mountains, couldn't defend himself, couldn't slap Wanning on the back and tell him to gather up the sunbeams.

He called up his house in Orange to say that he would not be home until late. Roma answered the telephone. He spoke mournfully, but she was not disturbed by it.

"Very well, Father. Don't get too

tired," she said in her well modulated voice.

When Wanning was ready to dictate his letter, he looked out from his private office into the reception room and saw that his stenographer in her hat and gloves, and furs of the newest cut, was just leaving.

"Good-night, Mr. Wanning," she said, drawing down her dotted veil.

Had there been important business letters to be got off on the night mail, he would have felt that he could detain her, but not for anything personal. Miss Doane was an expert legal stenographer, and she knew her value. The slightest delay in dispatching office business annoyed her. Letters that were not signed until the next morning awoke her deepest contempt. She was scrupulous in professional etiquette, and Wanning felt that their relations, though pleasant, were scarcely cordial.

As Miss Doane's trim figure disappeared through the outer door, little Annie Wooley, the copyist, came in from the stenographers' room. Her hat was pinned over one ear, and she was scrambling into her coat as she came, holding her gloves in her teeth and her battered handbag in the fist that was already through a sleeve.

"Annie, I wanted to dictate a letter. You were just leaving, weren't you?"

"Oh, I don't mind!" she answered cheerfully, and pulling off her old coat, threw it on a chair. "I'll get my book."

She followed him into his room and sat down by a table—though she wrote with her book on her knee.

Wanning had several times kept her after office hours to take his private letters for him, and she had always been good-natured about it. On each occasion, when he gave her a dollar to get her dinner, she protested, laughing, and saying that she could never eat so much as that.

She seemed a happy sort of little creature, didn't pout when she was scolded, and giggled about her own mistakes in spelling. She was plump and undersized, always dodging under the elbows of taller people and clattering about on high heels, much run over. She had bright black eyes and fuzzy black hair in which, despite Miss Doane's reprimands, she often stuck her pencil. She was the girl who couldn't believe that Wanning was fifty, and he had liked her ever since he overheard that conversation.

Tilting back his chair—he never assumed this position when he dictated to Miss Doane—Wanning began: "To Mr. D. E. Brown, South Forks, Wyoming."

He shaded his eyes with his hand and talked off a long letter to this man who would be sorry that his mortal frame was breaking up. He recalled to him certain fine months they had spent together on the Wind River when they were young men, and said he sometimes wished that like D. E. Brown, he had claimed his freedom in a big country where the wheels did not grind a man as hard as they did in New York. He had spent all these years hustling about and getting ready to live the way he wanted to live, and now he had a puncture the doctors couldn't mend. What was the use of it?

Wanning's thoughts were fixed on the trout streams and the great silver-firs in the canyons of the Wind River Mountains, when he was disturbed by a soft, repeated sniffling. He looked out between his fingers. Little Annie, carried away by his eloquence, was fairly panting to make dots and dashes fast enough, and she was sopping her eyes with an unpresentable, end-of-the-day handkerchief.

Wanning rambled on in his dictation. Why was she crying? What did it matter to her? He was a man who said good-morning to her, who sometimes took an hour of the precious few she had left at the end of the day and then complained about her bad spelling. When the letter was finished, he handed her a new two dollar bill.

"I haven't got any change to-night; and anyhow, I'd like you to eat a whole lot. I'm on a diet, and I want to see everybody else eat."

Annie tucked her notebook under

her arm and stood looking at the bill which she had not taken up from the table.

"I don't like to be paid for taking letters to your friends, Mr. Wanning," she said impulsively. "I can run personal letters off between times. It ain't as if I needed the money," she added carelessly.

"Get along with you! Anybody who is eighteen years old and has a sweet tooth needs money, all they can get."

Annie giggled and darted out with the bill in her hand.

Wanning strolled aimlessly after her into the reception room.

"Let me have that letter before lunch to-morrow, please, and be sure that nobody sees it." He stopped and frowned. "I don't look very sick, do I?"

"I should say you don't!" Annie got her coat on after considerable tugging. "Why don't you call in a specialist? My mother called a specialist for my father before he died."

"Oh, is your father dead?"

"I should say he is! He was a painter by trade, and he fell off a seventy-foot stack into the East River. Mother couldn't get anything out of the company, because he wasn't buckled. He lingered for four months, so I know all about taking care of sick people. I was attending business college then, and sick as he was, he used to give me dictation for practice. He made us all go into professions; the girls, too. He didn't like us to just run."

Wanning would have liked to keep Annie and hear more about her family, but it was nearly seven o'clock, and he knew he ought, in mercy, to let her go. She was the only person to whom he had talked about his illness, who had been frank and honest with him, who had looked at him with eyes that concealed nothing. When he broke the news of his condition to his partners that morning, they shut him off as if he were uttering indecent ravings. All day they had met him with a hurried, abstracted manner. McQuiston and Wade went out to lunch together, and he knew what they were thinking, perhaps talking, about. Wanning had brought into the firm valuable business, but he was less enterprising than either of his partners.

III

In the early summer Wanning's family scattered. Roma swallowed her pride and sailed for Genoa to visit the Contessa Jenny. Harold went to Cornish to be in an artistic atmosphere. Mrs. Wanning and Florence took a cottage at York Harbour where Wanning was supposed to join them whenever he could get away from town. He did not often get away. He felt most at ease among his accustomed surroundings. He kept his car in the city and went back and forth from his office to the club where he was living. Old Sam, his butler, came in from Orange every night to put his clothes in order and make him comfortable.

Wanning began to feel that he would not tire of his office in a hundred years. Although he did very little work, it was pleasant to go down town every morning when the streets were crowded, the sky clear, and the sunshine bright. From the windows of his private office he could see the harbour and watch the ocean liners come down the North River and go out to sea.

While he read his mail, he often looked out and wondered why he had been so long indifferent to that extraordinary scene of human activity and hopefulness. How had a short-lived race of beings the energy and courage valiantly to begin enterprises which they could follow for only a few years; to throw up towers and build sea-monsters and found great businesses, when the frailest of the materials with which they worked, the paper upon which they wrote, the ink upon their pens, had more permanence in this world than they? All this material rubbish lasted. The linen clothing and cosmetics of the Egyptians had lasted. It was only the human flame that certainly, certainly went out. Other things had a fighting chance; they might meet

with mishap and be destroyed, they might not. But the human creature who gathered and shaped and hoarded and foolishly loved these things, he had no chance—absolutely none. Wanning's cane, his hat, his top-coat, might go from beggar to beggar and knock about in this world for another fifty years or so; but not he.

In the late afternoon he never hurried to leave his office now. Wonderful sunsets burned over the North River, wonderful stars trembled up among the towers; more wonderful than anything he could hurry away to. One of his windows looked directly down upon the spire of Old Trinity, with the green churchyard and the pale sycamores far below. Wanning often dropped into the church when he was going out to lunch; not because he was trying to make his peace with Heaven, but because the church was old and restful and familiar, because it and its gravestones had sat in the same place for a long while. He bought flowers from the street boys and kept them on his desk, which his partners thought strange behaviour, and which Miss Doane considered a sign that he was failing.

But there were graver things than bouquets for Miss Doane and the senior partner to ponder over.

The senior partner, McQuiston, in spite of his silvery hair and moustache and his important church connections, had rich natural taste for scandal.—After Mr. Wade went away for his vacation, in May, Wanning took Annie Wooley out of the copying room, put her at a desk in his private office, and raised her pay to eighteen dollars a week, explaining to McQuiston that for the summer months he would need a secretary. This explanation satisfied neither McQuiston nor Miss Doane.

Annie was also paid for overtime, and although Wanning attended to very little of the office business now, there was a great deal of overtime. Miss Doane was, of course, "above" questioning a chit like Annie; but what was he doing with his time and his new secretary, she wanted to know?

If anyone had told her that Wanning was writing a book, she would have said bitterly that it was just like him. In his youth Wanning had hankered for the pen. When he studied law, he had intended to combine that profession with some tempting form of authorship. Had he remained a bachelor, he would have been an unenterprising literary lawyer to the end of his days. It was his wife's restlessness and her practical turn of mind that had made him a money-getter. His illness seemed to bring back to him the illusions with which he left college.

As soon as his family were out of the way and he shut up the Orange house, he began to dictate his autobiography to Annie Wooley. It was not only the story of his life, but an expression of all his theories and opinions, and a commentary on the fifty years of events which he could remember.

Fortunately, he was able to take great interest in this undertaking. He had the happiest convictions about the clear-cut style he was developing and his increasing felicity in phrasing. He meant to publish the work handsomely, at his own expense and under his own name. He rather enjoyed the thought of how greatly disturbed Harold would be. He and Harold differed in their estimates of books. All the solid works which made up Wanning's library, Harold considered beneath contempt. Anybody, he said, could do that sort of thing.

When Wanning could not sleep at night, he turned on the light beside his bed and made notes on the chapter he meant to dictate the next day.

When he returned to the office after lunch, he gave instructions that he was not to be interrupted by telephone calls, and shut himself up with his secretary.

After he had opened all the windows and taken off his coat, he fell to dictating. He found it a delightful occupation, the solace of each day. Often he had sudden fits of tiredness; then he would lie down on the leather sofa and drop asleep, while Annie read "The Leopard's Spots" until he awoke.

Like many another business man

Wanning had relied so long on stenographers that the operation of writing with a pen had become laborious to him. When he undertook it, he wanted to cut everything short. But walking up and down his private office, with the strong afternoon sun pouring in at his windows, a fresh air stirring, all the people and boats moving restlessly down there, he could say things he wanted to say. It was like living his life over again.

He did not miss his wife or his daughters. He had become again the mild, contemplative youth he was in college, before he had a profession and a family to grind for, before the two needs which shape our destiny had made of him pretty much what they make of every man.

At five o'clock Wanning sometimes went out for a cup of tea and took Annie along. He felt dull and discouraged as soon as he was alone. So long as Annie was with him, he could keep a grip on his own thoughts. They talked about what he had just been dictating to her. She found that he liked to be questioned, and she tried to be greatly interested in it all.

After tea, they went back to the office. Occasionally Wanning lost track of time and kept Annie until it grew dark. He knew he had old McQuiston guessing, but he didn't care. One day the senior partner came to him with a reproving air.

"I am afraid Miss Doane is leaving us, Paul. She feels that Miss Wooley's promotion is irregular."

"How is that any business of hers, I'd like to know? She has all my legal work. She is always disagreeable enough about doing anything else."

McQuiston's puffy red face went a shade darker.

"Miss Doane has a certain professional pride; a strong feeling for office organization. She doesn't care to fill an equivocal position. I don't know that I blame her. She feels that there is something not quite regular about the confidence you seem to place in this inexperienced young woman."

Wanning pushed back his chair.

"I don't care a hang about Miss Doane's sense of propriety. I need a stenographer who will carry out my instructions. I've carried out Miss Doane's long enough. I've let that schoolma'am hector me for years. She can go when she pleases."

That night McQuiston wrote to his partner that things were in a bad way, and they would have to keep an eye on Wanning. He had been seen at the theatre with his new stenographer.

That was true. Wanning had several times taken Annie to the Palace on Saturday afternoon. When all his acquaintances were off motoring or playing golf, when the down town offices and even the streets were deserted, it amused him to watch a foolish show with a delighted, cheerful little person beside him.

Beyond her generosity, Annie had no shining merits of character, but she had the gift of thinking well of everything, and wishing well. When she was there Wanning felt as if there were someone who cared whether this was a good or a bad day with him. Old Sam, too, was like that. While the old black man put him to bed and made him comfortable, Wanning could talk to him as he talked to little Annie. Even if he dwelt upon his illness, in plain terms, in detail, he did not feel as if he were imposing on them.

People like Sam and Annie admitted misfortune—admitted it almost cheerfully. Annie and her family did not consider illness or any of its hard facts vulgar or indecent. It had its place in their scheme of life, as it had not in that of Wanning's friends.

Annie came out of a typical poor family of New York. Of eight children, only four lived to grow up. In such families the stream of life is broad enough, but runs shallow. In the children, vitality is exhausted early. The roots do not go down into anything very strong. Illness and deaths and funerals, in her own family and in those of her friends, had come at frequent intervals in Annie's life. Since

they had to be, she and her sisters made the best of them. There was something to be got out of funerals, even, if they were managed right. They kept people in touch with old friends who had moved up town, and revived kindly feelings.

Annie had often given up things she wanted because there was sickness at home, and now she was patient with her boss. What he paid her for overtime work by no means made up to her what she lost.

Annie was not in the least thrifty, nor were any of her sisters. She had to make a living, but she was not interested in getting all she could for her time, or in laying up for the future. Girls like Annie know that the future is a very uncertain thing, and they feel no responsibility about it. The present is what they have—and it is all they have. If Annie missed a chance to go sailing with the plumber's son on Saturday afternoon, why, she missed it. As for the two dollars her boss gave her, she handed them over to her mother. Now that Annie was getting more money, one of her sisters quit a job she didn't like and was staying at home for a rest. That was all promotion meant to Annie.

The first time Annie's boss asked her to work on Saturday afternoon, she could not hide her disappointment. He suggested that they might knock off early and go to a show, or take a run in his car, but she grew tearful and said it would be hard to make her family understand. Wanning thought perhaps he could explain to her mother. He called his motor and took Annie home.

When his car stopped in front of the tenement house on Eighth Avenue, heads came popping out of the windows for six storeys up, and all the neighbour women, in dressing sacks and wrappers, gazed down at the machine and at the couple alighting from it. A motor meant a wedding or the hospital.

The plumber's son, Willy Steen, came over from the corner saloon to see what was going on, and Annie introduced him at the doorstep.

Mrs. Wooley asked Wanning to come into the parlour and invited him to have a chair of ceremony between the folding bed and the piano.

Annie, nervous and tearful, escaped to the dining-room—the cheerful spot where the daughters visited with each other and with their friends. The parlour was a masked sleeping chamber and store room.

The plumber's son sat down on the sofa beside Mrs. Wooley, as if he were accustomed to share in the family councils. Mrs. Wooley waited expectant and kindly. She looked the sensible, hard-working woman that she was, and one could see she hadn't lived all her life on Eighth Avenue without learning a great deal.

Wanning explained to her that he was writing a book which he wanted to finish during the summer months when business was not so heavy. He was ill and could not work regularly. His secretary would have to take his dictation when he felt able to give it; must, in short, be a sort of companion to him. He would like to feel that she could go out in his car with him, or even to the theatre, when he felt like it. It might have been better if he had engaged a young man for this work, but since he had begun it with Annie, he would like to keep her if her mother was willing.

Mrs. Wooley watched him with friendly, searching eyes. She glanced at Willy Steen, who, wise in such distinctions, had decided that there was nothing shady about Annie's boss. He nodded his sanction.

"I don't want my girl to conduct herself in any such way as will prejudice her, Mr. Manning," she said thoughtfully. "If you've got daughters, you know how that is. You've been liberal with Annie, and it's a good position for her. It's right she should go to business every day, and I want her to do her work right, but I like to have her home after working hours. I always think a young girl's time is her

own after business hours, and I try not to burden them when they come home. I'm willing she should do your work as suits you, if it's her wish; but I don't like to press her. The good times she misses now, it's not you nor me, sir, that can make them up to her. These young things has their feelings."

"Oh, I don't want to press her, either," Wanning said hastily. "I simply want to know that you understand the situation. I've made her a little present in my will as a recognition that she is doing more for me than she is paid for."

"That's something above me, sir. We'll hope there won't be no question of wills for many years yet," Mrs. Wooley spoke heartily. "I'm glad if my girl can be of any use to you, just so she don't prejudice herself."

The plumber's son rose as if the interview were over.

"It's all right, Mama Wooley, don't you worry," he said.

He picked up his canvas cap and turned to Wanning. "You see, Annie ain't the sort of girl that would want to be spotted circulating around with a moneyed party her folks didn't know all about. She'd lose friends by it."

After this conversation Annie felt a great deal happier. She was still shy and a trifle awkward with poor Wanning when they were outside the office building, and she missed the old freedom of her Saturday afternoons. But she did the best she could, and Willy Steen tried to make it up to her.

In Annie's absence he often came in of an afternoon to have a cup of tea and a sugar-bun with Mrs. Wooley and the daughter who was "resting." As they sat at the dining-room table, they discussed Annie's employer, his peculiarities, his health, and what he had told Mrs. Wooley about his will.

Mrs. Wooley said she sometimes felt afraid he might disinherit his children, as rich people often did, and make talk; but she hoped for the best. Whatever came to Annie, she prayed it might not be in the form of taxable property.

IV

Late in September Wanning grew suddenly worse. His family hurried home, and he was put to bed in his house in Orange. He kept asking the doctors when he could get back to the office, but he lived only eight days.

The morning after his father's funeral, Harold went to the office to consult Wanning's partners and to read the will. Everything in the will was as it should be. There were no surprises except a codicil in the form of a letter to Mrs. Wanning, dated July 8th, requesting that out of the estate she should pay the sum of one thousand dollars to his stenographer, Annie Wooley, "in recognition of her faithful services."

"I thought Miss Doane was my father's stenographer," Harold exclaimed.

Alec McQuiston looked embarrassed and spoke in a low, guarded tone.

"She was, for years. But this spring—" he hesitated.

McQuiston loved a scandal. He leaned across his desk toward Harold.

"This spring your father put this little girl, Miss Wooley, a copyist, utterly inexperienced, in Miss Doane's place. Miss Doane was indignant and left us. The change made comment here in the office. It was slightly—No, I will be frank with you, Harold, it was very irregular."

Harold also looked grave. "What could my father have meant by such a request as this to my mother?"

The silver haired senior partner flushed and spoke as if he were trying to break something gently.

"I don't understand it, my boy. But I think, indeed I prefer to think, that your father was not quite himself all this summer. A man like your father does not, in his right senses, find pleasure in the society of an ignorant, common little girl. He does not make a practice of keeping her at the office after hours, often until eight o'clock, or take her to restaurants and to the

theatre with him; not, at least, in a slanderous city like New York."

Harold flinched before McQuiston's meaning gaze and turned aside in pained silence. He knew, as a dramatist, that there are dark chapters in all men's lives, and this but too clearly explained why his father had stayed in town all summer instead of joining his family.

McQuiston asked if he should ring for Annie Wooley.

Harold drew himself up. "No. Why should I see her? I prefer not to. But with your permission, Mr. McQuiston, I will take charge of this request to my mother. It could only give her pain, and might awaken doubts in her mind."

"We hardly know," murmured the senior partner, "where an investigation would lead us. Technically, of course, I cannot agree with you. But if, as one of the executors of the will, you wish to assume personal responsibility for this bequest, under the circumstances — irregularities beget irregularities."

"My first duty to my father," said Harold, "is to protect my mother."

That afternoon McQuiston called Annie Wooley into his private office and told her that her services would not be needed any longer, and that in lieu of notice the clerk would give her two week's salary.

"Can I call up here for references?" Annie asked.

"Certainly. But you had better ask for me, personally. You must know there has been some criticism of you here in the office, Miss Wooley."

"What about?" Annie asked boldly.

"Well, a young girl like you cannot render so much personal service to her employer as you did to Mr. Wanning without causing unfavourable comment. To be blunt with you, for your own good, my dear young lady, your services to your employer should terminate in the office, and at the close of office hours. Mr. Wanning was a very sick man and his judgment was at fault, but you should have known what a girl in your station can do and what she cannot do."

The vague discomfort of months flashed up in little Annie. She had no mind to stand by and be lectured without having a word to say for herself.

"Of course he was sick, poor man!" she burst out. "Not as anybody seemed much upset about it. I wouldn't have given up my half-holidays for anybody if they hadn't been sick, no matter what they paid me. There wasn't anything in it for me."

McQuiston raised his hand warningly.

"That will do, young lady. But when you get another place, remember this: it is never your duty to entertain or to provide amusement for your employer."

He gave Annie a look which she did not clearly understand, although she pronounced him a nasty old man as she hustled on her hat and jacket.

When Annie reached home she found Willy Steen sitting with her mother and sister at the dining-room table. This was the first day that Annie had gone to the office since Wanning's death, and her family awaited her return with suspense.

"Hello yourself," Annie called as she came in and threw her handbag into an empty armchair.

"You're off early, Annie," said her mother gravely. "Has the will been read?"

"I guess so. Yes, I know it has. Miss Wilson got it out of the safe for them. The son came in. He's a pill."

"Was nothing said to you, daughter?"

"Yes, a lot. Please give me some tea, mother." Annie felt that her swagger was failing.

"Don't tantalize us, Ann," her sister broke in. "Didn't you get anything?"

"I got the mit, all right. And some back talk from the old man that I'm awful sore about."

Annie dashed away the tears and gulped her tea.

Gradually her mother and Willy drew the story from her. Willy offered

at once to go to the office building and take his stand outside the door and never leave it until he had punched old Mr. McQuiston's face. He rose as if to attend to it at once, but Mrs. Wooley drew him to his chair again and patted his arm.

"It would only start talk and get the girl in trouble, Willy. When it's lawyers, folks in our station is helpless. I certainly believed that man when he sat here; you heard him yourself. Such a gentleman as he looked."

Willy thumped his great fist, still in punching position, down on his knee.

"Never you be fooled again, Mama Wooley. You'll never get anything out of a rich guy that he ain't signed up in the courts for. Rich is tight. There's no exceptions."

Annie shook her head.

"I didn't want anything out of him. He was a nice, kind man, and he had his troubles, I guess. He wasn't tight."

"Still," said Mrs. Wooley sadly, "Mr. Wanning had no call to hold out promises. I hate to be disappointed in a gentleman. You've had confining work for some time, daughter; a rest will do you good."

THE MISTY LAKE

By Charles Wharton Stork

MIRROR-WATER silvery smooth
Where the clustered lily-pads lie,
And the slim birch peeps among pines that pierce
Toward the dead gray void of the sky.

But the mirror dims under lilac mist,
The tree-fringe blurs behind,
And the lake is a vague soft nothingness
Like the blank of a tired mind.

A MAN is always as great a fool as some woman or other has thought it worth while to make him.

A PRETTY stenographer covereth a multitude of misspelled words.

SALARY:—A chorus girl's pin money.

THE DREAM

By Muna Lee

"I SHOULD have known," he said humbly, "that I could not keep it from you."

She felt a tremulous comfort in this admittance of her nearness to his thought, and a sense of dismay—which amounted to physical illness—that her shrinking doubt was confirmed.

She had not really known: he overrated her intuition. She had feared; and her whole nervous strength had forced itself to a steady voicing as fact the fear that tormented her. She had expected and craved denial. Instead there had come stark admittance.

She did not speak now, but waited. His words came awkwardly at first, a little harsh, then in a relieved confessional rush. He was curiously unused to lying.

"If you can see how it was—at first we always talked of you—she was so unhappy—and had nobody—"

"Her husband?" the dry query formed itself on her lips, but, staring at him dumbly, she left it unuttered.

"I swear I tried to leave—once I did leave, and had to go back because Roberts was sick. She took care of him. She took care of everybody. Then she had to go to her people to wait until Blount finished his contract and could take her with him. That was two years ago—eighteen months before I came home. That's the whole story. I haven't seen her since. I shall never see her again."

She spoke at last, hardly above a whisper:

"I felt the change in your letters. They came so much oftener—so different.

"When were you sure?" he demanded with sudden curiosity.

"Oh—I knew," she said vaguely. "And all that time you wrote without meaning what you said?"

"I meant it," he answered impatiently. "I didn't realize at first that I loved her—I wanted to get away and think. Then, on shipboard, coming home, it came over me—"

"You understand that you are free?" she asked gravely.

"Oh, free—" he shrugged away from the responsibility of decision which freedom entailed. "I love you—I love her. You think me a scoundrel, I suppose."

Struck by the novelty of his own suggestion, he turned to her with egoistic harshness:

"What do you think of me?" he demanded, his voice rising sharply on the question.

She smiled, feeling infinitely calmer and older than he should ever be.

"You were a boy. Do you think I could blame a boy for anything? And if you have found someone you love more, the fault is in me. I wish you loved me, but we cannot control these things. We must face the situation as it is."

"You still care?" he asked doubtfully.

Again she smiled.

"I am not worth it!" he said.

"Probably not," she agreed. "But love is hardly a matter of value received."

She was trying hard to keep quiet, controlled; conscious that so long as she remained mistress of herself she

was mistress of the situation and of him.

He turned toward her with a characteristic gesture of flamboyant helplessness.

"What shall we do? I love you more than you believe. I need you. But I cannot lie about what she means in my heart."

"Of course not," she acquiesced. "Let me think."

When she spoke again after a brief silence, her words struck him as inconsequential, lacking in the emotional quality which the situation demanded.

"How long did you know her?"

"She and Blount were there for four or five months," he said shortly. "Then she left, as I told you. But time—" his voice trailed off indignantly.

"Let me think," she repeated, and looked ahead where night lay under the elms like a pool. But this was merely to gain time; for, like a man in the clutches of death, she had thought even while she spoke.

She knew him so well. It was a dream that enthralled, a dream she must conquer; and certain knowledge of what the situation demanded was born in her. Reality blots out a dream. He believed he loved someone else; she knew it was herself he loved. He, too, must be made to realize this.

There was only one way to make him realize: he must see this other woman again with eyes cleared of illusion. A boyish memory was in his mind, transformed by the unreasoning poetry of his imagination into a rival impossible to meet. But with a woman of flesh and blood she could hold her own. Once he found the difference between fact and vision, he would return as to a haven. But he must go, he must be made to see! She felt such a sensation as must visit Deity snaring the feet of the prodigal into devious paths of return.

Her voice was very gentle.

"We must consider her, too. It is not a question to be decided by one for three, but for three by two. She herself—"

"Don't you see," he interrupted, "that circumstances make it impossible for us to think of each other except as two people foredoomed to meet and separate?"

She winced a little from the "us" in which she had no part, but rallied quickly to counter his argument.

"The woman you love must always be considered. She needs you. She needs the spiritual strength that comes from the assurance of being loved. You should go to her, let her know she can always depend on your love. Then if you think best come away. But a woman craves tangible evidence—let her see you again. It is her right to know what she means in your life."

"She does know," he said, half-angrily.

Again she winced, almost noticeably.

"A woman doubts," she told him, "so long away. She cannot be sure after so many months. And you said she was lonely, unhappy— Do you write to her?"

By sheer effort of will the question seemed incidental.

"I write to Blount." His answer came unwillingly. "She probably sees some of the letters."

"And she writes?"

"It has been a long time since her last letter." His reluctance increased. "And just now, of course, her little girl is extremely ill."

"Then don't you see," she urged, "that if she is in trouble and hasn't sent you any word—"

"Oh, there were messages in Blount's letters," he muttered.

"Any direct word, then—it is because of a doubt, a pain, creeping in on her own mind. You owe it to her to let her know that through everything she can trust your love, she can believe in that. A woman must believe in something. Don't tell her anything if you prefer not. She can tell without any words if you love her. There's no unfairness to her husband, to your friend, in this, for you and she have already declared yourselves to each other. There could

be no unfairness anyway. Love cannot be anything but a strengthening and purifying force. It cannot harm anyone for her to have her confidence in you renewed. And even if it should, love cannot consider any third person. It is not right that it should."

To herself her words rang hollow, desperate, with a mocking and betraying semblance of sincerity. But he was listening half-convinced—desirous to be convinced, she realized bitterly—and she went on rapidly, with the nervous eagerness of a mother who is trying to hold the attention of a sick child.

"Why not see her—it will be easy to arrange for a consultation with Blount—"

"Oh, yes," he assented absently. "Blount really wants to get my idea on some of his arrangements for the next exhibition. He has written for me to come. But I felt that I must not see her again."

"But you must! She has a right to know that you are unchanged, unchangeable—"

The words sounded in her own ears like a clatter of ironic laughter, but he listened gravely.

"Then come back. And if you still feel you need me, I love you, Jim—"

Her voice wavered a little, but she caught herself and went on:

"At any rate, you will have my friendship, and so shall she, even though we shall never know each other. But go to her, dear. It is your duty."

And stunning her with the completeness and ease of her victory,

"I will go," he said.

II

He left within a few days.

"Don't bother to write," she told him. "And don't let yourself feel grieved about me. It is all right."

And when he had kissed her then with a certain loving pity and said, "I will stay if you tell me," she had conquered the desperate temptation to take him at his word and had repeated quietly,

"You must go."

She lived through the weeks until he should come again, feverishly, anxiously, yet with a relieved certainty of the outcome.

It was all so natural as to have been inevitable, she told herself sternly in moments of rebellion. During that long period of absence he had been hardly more than a boy, lonely, in a foreign city; she had been too young to realize how her own childishly unsympathetic letters must alienate him; of course his nature had responded gratefully to this woman of kindly manners and lovely face who had tried to forget her loneliness of heart in soothing his. For the woman herself, curiously enough, she felt no resentment.

"Jim idealized her," she thought, "and any woman would want to take care of him—would love him," she added passionately to herself.

She gloated over her own manifest and manifold advantages. The event was sure. She had seen a sketch of Mrs. Blount, made at the time when Jim knew her. Even then the eyes had been a little hard. They would be harder now. And that seven years' seniority of hers of which Jim seemed forgetful should be apparent by this time. And when he realized his own love had merely been a diverting incident in a weary woman's life—a slight pain, a slight joy, a means of forgetting!

"It will hurt him terribly at first," she realized, "then he will remember me and be glad."

And she wept to picture his homecoming, somewhat saddened, somewhat chastened, but happy in the confidence of her welcome.

"I should never fail him," she promised herself proudly.

Toward the last few days of his absence her confidence deepened to triumph. Her faith in love and truth and indomitable fact would save him, would save them both. She felt intensely that it would always save them; that life would be powerless to batter down this bulwark thrown about their love. Even

he would be glad to forego a shade, a vagueness, for the proud and dominant reality.

When the day arrived, she went down alone to meet him, in a serenity of confidence that was deeper than joy. The crowd seemed to fall away from him as figures fade out in a vision. She was conscious of nothing but his face, with its curious new intent look, as of one who has found the peace of an eternal certainty. He came directly toward her. His face was paler, finer, she noted, as she waited, terrified, for him to speak.

He looked at her a moment, then beyond her as at a sublime and awing vision.

When he did speak, it was with a new tone, the tone of the poet who is also seer and mystic:

"You were right," he said. "My love for her was a holy and deathless thing. Thank God, you did not let me falter from it. She died three days before I got there."

DUSK

By David Morton

YOU are remembered where this dusk drifts through,
That touches me with dim, unquiet hands,
And lays upon my heart a want of you,
Tender like twilights on old lovely lands.
No grievous longing shakes me in its grip,
No tugging need that will not let me be,
But quiet like the quiet of a ship
That dreams of home-lands lying oversea.

The shore-line darkens, darkens too the sky,
Where one by one the punctual stars come through,
Mirrored along the marges where they lie. . . .
The late light fades . . . and leaves this want of you,
Touching my heart with dim, unquiet hands,
Like twilights fallen on forgotten lands.

WHENEVER a man disappears, it is a sign that he is either running away with a woman—or from one.

LONG engagements should be avoided. They lead to marriage.

THE CLERK

By Rita Wellman

I

HE wondered why it was that this night seemed to be the consummation of dreams, the fiery goal to which all his dreary days had yearned. All his school days, all his college days, all his business days seemed to have been lived, toilsome hour upon toilsome hour, that he might be here now, looking through this window into this dance room, with the most beautiful woman he had ever seen about to meet him for their first rendezvous.

He leaped in joy from crag to crag of his past, laughing down into the dusty caverns of forgotten dull days, rejoicing that it had not been all in vain.

Here it was—*Life!*

Life was music, life was dancing, life was love! Life was wearing a new dress suit and feeling clean and tall and imposing. Life was saying in a new low voice all the wittiest things he could remember from the books he had read—oh, so laboriously! Life was a night of unexpectedness and motion and white throats and soft chiffons, and a sudden dizzy realization of being a *man!*

His name was John Thomas, and he worked as a clerk in a broker's office. Millions passed under his nose every day. It seemed as if his nose grew longer and longer in an effort to smell the good human odour of the paper bills that were always passing through his hands.

But he had a great contempt for money, as all men have who handle great quantities of it without ever possessing it. He took his little weekly sum as a man helps himself at table to what he is able to manage, never once asking fate if he should be allowed to have more. He was a man who believed in the goodness of destiny because he was naturally very orderly, and because he had always allowed stronger minds than his own to do his thinking for him.

She was coming. He heard her laugh on the terrace beyond.

She was like a heroine in a play—a French play. She had no relation to the commonplace. She made him think of everything unattainable and expensive. When he looked at her he had a yearning for the Orient, for the songs of dancing girls, the smell of incense, and the feel of soft silks reeking with amber and musk. He had never known these things, but they were vivid in his imagination. Her eyes were brown like a deer's, with the inscrutable depths of a sublime stupidity.

"Where are you? I can't see you in the dark there."

Her voice! It nourished him as a magic Eastern potion from out of a mysterious crystal cup. As its sweetness stole over him he could feel himself bloom into beauty and importance. Life was embracing him with her velvet arms!

"Here, Mrs. Dunham. By the window here—can't you see me?"

He went forward and very deferentially took her arm and led her to the bench close by.

"I have kept you waiting. It was bad of me."

"No, I enjoyed it. That is—anticipation makes the heart grow fonder, you know."

"You have been here before, of course?"

"No. This is my first time. It was good of Mr. Neal to ask me."

"Men are so hard to get. I wonder why?"

"When there are such beautiful women around, too . . ."

She received his compliment and his gaze of admiration with dignity, as a woman should who is accustomed to such things. Her beautiful stupid eyes looked with dazzling charm into his.

He reached to touch her hand, cautiously and curiously, as a tourist might run his thick fingers over the satin surface of a superb marble.

She drew away, laughing.

"He is very rich," she said.

"Who? Oh, our host. Yes, very rich. I never knew until to-night what it means to be rich. I'd always thought it meant having too much to attend to. But to-night . . ."

"To-night . . .?"

"To-night I see it means having a background for life. I've always dreamed of living romantic dramas, but to-night is the first time I have realized why I never could—they must be *set*."

"Yes, they must be set. All women realize that. That is why beautiful women sell themselves for money. They owe it to themselves to have a background."

There was a pause.

They both felt that this was a little beyond them. John Thomas felt that he could not possibly live up to the colour of this sort of thing, and he hoped that she could not. He admired intelligence in a woman, but it frightened him.

With charming directness she read his uneasiness.

"We sound like one of these modern novelists," she said. "Let's be plain and simple. I want you to do something for me."

This was delightful. He felt Romance beckon to him. He could run out into the garden and fight a duel for her. He would follow any servant of hers blindfold, if he but had the command from her lips. She inspired him to old-fashioned deeds which needed a great deal of courage and stupidity, and faith in a happy ending.

"Tell me. I will do anything."

"Well, I hardly know how to ask you. It's about Mr. Neal . . ."

"Our host."

"Yes. You know him well, I believe?"

"Yes. That is, as well as can be expected. I work for him."

"So I understood. I want you to arrange something . . . I want to see him again. There are so many here to-night. Will you see if it can be done? A little party—say four of us—you understand? When he is in the right mood. You men are so clever about those things—especially with your . . ."

"Employers!" he finished for her, and felt the night of dance and music and love shiver and crash as a glass palace of enchantment in a fairy tale.

How different from the gallant deeds he dreamed of! She wanted to use him!

He looked into her brown eyes and their engaging stupidity was lost in a look of avarice and sordid intrigue. In those brilliant mirrors he saw himself shrivel into his true proportions. He saw himself the clerk again, the small, correct, mean, insignificant man who had all his life done the right thing in order that bolder men might do magnificent wrong things.

"I will do what I can," he said.

It was the exact answer he made daily to his employer.

She pressed his hand.

"Thank you. That is so good of you. I knew you were like that. That is why I chose you, you from all the others."

He knew why she had chosen him, because he was the safest, the most impressionable, the most insignificant, the one for whom she had the least respect.

She remained with him, but the soft gleam had gone from her eyes; in its place was a glitter, the winking flash of a planet evolving through space

alight with the purpose of its own destiny.

He made no protest when she rose to go, winding her long, silky, tassely things about her, making ready like a splendid ship starting on a fresh voyage of triumph.

"Good evening, and thank you. We understand each other perfectly. I never knew anyone with whom I felt so much in sympathy."

And she was gone. She left him despising himself. His dreary, commonplace days weighed about his neck in a chain of despair. Oh, why was he ever born? A dazzling light of pitiless truth seemed to search him out in the dark, to expose ruthlessly his puny, scrawny stooped frame, his meek eyes, his long, docile nose, his whole uninteresting, insignificant, contemptible self.

He looked in upon the dancers. His lower legs ached with bitterness. Young men, no less stupid than he, but crowned with health and vitality and self-belief. Each had chosen some young girl. Each would pursue his desire, or caprice, as far as he wished or was allowed, but each would know some sweet thing, a hasty kiss, a modest, reluctant refusal, a dizzy approach to conquest. God, what would he not give for such things as this! No woman had ever looked upon him except with the utmost politeness, women who are always rude to the men they fear. He turned away and walked down into the garden. Bitter was his soul, bitter, bitter!

His desire for the love of woman exceeded all mere physical hunger; wrapped in it was his desire for life itself, for poetry, for beauty, for knowledge. He whimpered in the dark as weak things do, afraid even to make the honest sounds of pain.

"*Man!*" he muttered to himself. "I call myself a *man!* Thing! Idiot! Fool! Worm!"

He ran down the driveway. He was going home—to hide.

He hated his suburb with its neat and respectable homes in which neat and respectable clerks lived careful lives balancing on the line between poverty and dishonesty. It had an eternal odour of canned tomato soup.

On the train he opened a magazine. The magazine offered to him and his kind the thrills which avoided them in life, but he had no desire to read now, and the movement hurt his eyes.

He turned the leaves at the back. His eye, as it was meant to do, was caught by the words:

BE A MAN

He read further.

ARE YOU INSIGNIFICANT, PALE, THIN, TIMID—NO VITALITY?
DOES THE LOVE OF WOMAN PASS YOU BY?
DO YOU LONG TO BE MAGNETIC? ATTRACTIVE? VIRILE?

It was like the voice of God heard in the desert of despair.

He read the rest of the advertisement with hungry eyes. His heart pounded and resounded in his ears. He thrilled with excitement. He was going to answer the advertisement that night. He was going to learn how to be magnetic, attractive, virile.

He got off at his station like a man in a dream. He no longer smelled the canned tomato soup. He walked with sovereign pity up the narrow concrete sidewalk with its neat, doll-like houses on either side, where a few persistent victrolas complained into the night.

To-morrow he would enter a new world.

II

JOHN THOMAS spent all of his spare time obeying the commands of the correspondence god who had called to him; all his spare money was spent in propitiation. His mysterious teacher in the West had sent him his portrait, a formidable-looking portrait of chest proportions and arm and leg muscles which made John Thomas sigh in de-

spairing admiration. He slipped this picture into his mirror and every night made comparisons; bitter as these were, he worked hard, and being methodical and careful in everything, obeyed instructions to the letter.

He was rewarded. The glorious day came when he could no longer button his vest.

This day was followed by others of even greater triumph, when he could stand before the mirror and face the picture without shame. He had achieved a chest! For the first time since he was born he knew what it was to draw a deep breath of life.

His absorption in his "treatment" made him preoccupied at work. He made a grave mistake on the books. Mr. Neal sent for him to appear in the inner office, where a man faced an enormous unshaded window, an empty, unsympathetic mahogany desk, and Mr. Neal's little steel eyes.

"Mr. Thomas, they tell me that it was you who made that mistake in the account last week. Is that true?"

"Yes, sir. I am sorry, sir."

"See that it doesn't occur again."

Mr. Neal's little scalpel eyes, in the shadows, observed him curiously, exposed as he was to the cruel light from the high window.

"Why, you've changed, Thomas," he said. "You've grown bigger—every way. I'd scarcely know you."

"Yes, sir," Thomas answered, and moved to the other foot.

It made him very proud. Even Mr. Neal. . . . But he was worried. He shouldn't neglect business. He had a bad memory. He must give all his attention to details or—what might happen?

Going home in the train, he turned over the leaves of his magazine. Shouting at him were the words:

HAVE YOU A BAD MEMORY?

He read on:

DO YOU FORGET THINGS? DOES YOUR SUCCESS IN BUSINESS DEPEND UPON YOUR MEMORY? LEARN TO REMEMBER EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO.

He answered the advertisement that night.

With the same persistence and faith with which he had set about developing his muscles, he now set about to develop his memory. In a few weeks he could remember everything he wanted to. In a few months he could forget nothing.

In the meantime his physical development went on until the calves of his legs were knotted and full like the trunks of oak trees, and his chest so broad and deep that he pounded it every few minutes in order to hear the reassuring answer from it.

He scarcely knew himself now. New, unlooked-for developments seemed to have taken place. New longings arose within him. He who had always been bullied and mocked by other men now had a desire to taste the sweets of mastery himself. The punching bag which he beat every day grew to bore him. He wanted to *hurt* when he punched.

He found his great chest leading him to places where there were other great chests, equally pugnacious. The longing to fight grew almost unbearable.

Finally one night the opportunity arrived.

There was a man who talked out of the side of his mouth who wanted a fight. John Thomas, trembling in his soul, got to his feet, impelled, almost inspired, by his new muscles. The two faced each other, and the stranger laughed, a loud, coarse, derisive laugh which shook John Thomas to the core. They fought. John Thomas was no fighter. He had always been a good apologizer. Now he struck out blindly with the fury of fear. The other man's contemptuous self-reliance was no match for John Thomas's panic-stricken ferocity.

The fight ended with John victorious, his body covered with the other man's blood. They made him a hero, but he ran away in shame. The sound of the

other man's yielding flesh sickened him. He felt his new strong arms curiously; how alive and wilful they had been, like independent things with souls of their own! He wondered where they would lead him.

The next day a short man in a checked suit came to him and offered to back him as a "club" prize-fighter. In spite of himself his chest made him answer "yes." It longed for more blood.

III

THE love of woman had been offered as a reward for his labours by the advertisement, but as yet none had come to him. Then at last, when he was least expecting her, she appeared in an old coat and a hat which almost concealed her.

She was as beautiful as the white wood flowers which belong to a race of parasites, living on the vitality of sturdier neighbours. She was very young and very pure, and planning a comfortable future for herself. Her white beauty caught him up with a gasp. His chest led him nearer her. Her skin was cool and waxy, and its fragrance intoxicated him. He longed to tear her apart, petal by petal, to discover the honey gold core of her heart.

His chest did his wooing for him. It was fierce and savage and masterful. Behind it his heart trembled. He marvelled at the ease with which it conquered. For only a few days it had to rage and heave, and then at last the little flower was caught against it and bruised, until her protests grew less and less and fainter and fainter until they came no longer.

And so one day John Thomas awoke and found against his chest a golden head, innocently sleeping. He looked down in wonder at the face pressed against his heart, a violet-shadowed face of weakness and fascination and subtle sinful innocence.

He trembled in his inmost soul. Where had his powerful new body led him? What was he to do with this frail burden of silk and pearl and weak clingingness? Love! He knew nothing of love. He had never learned how. He knew only how to be strong—and how to remember.

He who had always known what it is to be a slave now knew the more uncomfortable sensation of having one. Wherever he went she followed, a white shadow from a new moon, small and feeble. If he spoke she listened—hungrily. If he was silent she waited—patiently. When he was angry she suffered—silently. When he was gay she watched—reverently. Her thin white arms were always outstretched to him as if for life. When allowed they clung desperately; when thrown off they waited—and then clung again.

He dreaded the sight of her. He abandoned her again and again, leaving her watching after him like a forlorn white kitten. But she always found him again, and waited, suffering and silent, and then she would cling again like the white parasites of the woods.

His life grew miserable. He could not sleep at night with the throbbing of his terrible memory, which would not allow him to forget anything, which kept him reviewing everything he had seen and said and heard, over and over again, and with the cloying weight of her thin self coiled about his soul. He no longer dreamed of romance. He no longer longed for importance. He thought only of escape.

Not long afterward, turning to his oracle, the advertisement pages of the magazines, he read the words:

ARE YOU IN TROUBLE?
IS YOUR SOUL OPPRESSED?
IS YOUR BURDEN TOO HEAVY TO BEAR?
GIVE YOUR SOUL TO GOD.
LEARN TO SPEAK TO HIM.
HE IS THE ONE LAW AND CONSOLATION.

He sighed—and answered the advertisement.

Through the mail religion came to him steadily and softly like wings in the night. He grew thin and pale and uplifted. His lusty companions of the ring deserted in panic—it was whispered that he was dying of a mysterious disease. His white flower wilted against his shrinking breast—and vanished. He was left alone.

Every mail brought him fresh triumph for the soul. As his mind turned to immaterial things his persecuting memory left him. He lived in the spirit and grew very silent and strange and poor.

One day, scarcely able to walk, murmuring a prayer to the Correspondent's god, he found himself, through habit, walking into the offices of Mr. Neal. As he seemed feeble and harmless, they allowed him into the private office of Mr. Neal himself.

Mr. Neal, who prided himself on remembering faces, called out:

"Why, I do believe it's Thomas. What has happened to you?"

"Religion," was the faint answer. "May I—come back?"

"Why, yes, Thomas. We need you. You were always a reliable man.

"Yes, sir. All but once. I've missed you, sir. I never realized it. I've missed being reliable. When shall I start?"

"To-morrow? Say to-morrow at nine, as usual?"

"Yes, sir. To-morrow at nine—as usual."

As he was walking out he smiled at the new stenographer, his old smile of self-respect for the unattainable. Several of the old clerks remembered him, and he answered their good-natured superiority with his old good-natured obsequiousness.

He left the office feeling happy and natural at last, as if waking from a bad dream. He longed for to-morrow. For, although he had achieved a prodigious chest measurement and a miraculous memory, and had inspired a great passion, he had, to the last, the soul of a clerk.

ALIBI:—The ability to prove that you were not committing a particular indiscretion at a certain time and place by showing you were committing another indiscretion at the same time at another place.

A MAN is down and out when he wonders where his next meal is coming from. A woman, when she wonders where her next kiss is coming from.

HANDSOME MEN

NOTHING so improves personal appearance as that slight smooth tan which comes with exposure to the sun and air.

"SUNBRONZE DE LUXE"

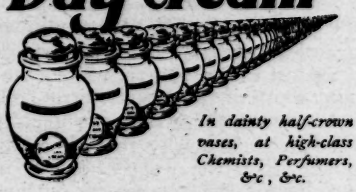
gives a perfect simulation of this tint, is **undetectable, perfectly harmless, and absolutely genuine,** to which its 5,000 testimonials received from every quarter of the globe is sufficient evidence. Unique in method and perfection of result, SUNBRONZE DE LUXE has stood the **TEST OF TIME.** Forwarded free from observation, price **10/6** (*Mark II de Luxe*, **3 guineas**). Fresh Complexion Tint for Ladies, on same principle, at same prices. Direct from

Sunbronze Laboratories, 157, Church St., Stoke Newington, London. (*Established* 1902.)

The Toilet Cream de Luxe

POMEROY DAY CREAM is, of all "vanishing" creams, the most delightful. It has a lovely effect on the skin and is so fragrant and refreshing that one wants to be using it always. Being non-greasy and vanishing it can be used any time, any day. The more one uses it, the better for the skin, which is rendered soft, smooth, and fresh, and is protected against wind and weather.

Pomeroy Day Cream



In dainty half-crown vases, at high-class Chemists, Perfumers, &c., &c.

MRS. POMEROY, LTD.
29, Old Bond Street, London, W.

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Advertisements are charged under Headings 1/3 per line.

BOOKS

"HOW TO WIN WEEKLY," an interesting little book clearly explaining how to obtain A REGULAR INCOME FROM RACING. Price 3d.—SIMPLEX CO., 1, New Oxford Street, W.C. 1.

LITERARY

> £5 £3 £1 <

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WRIGHT'S DETECTIVES. For Private Inquiries and Secret Watchings this Agency stands facile princeps for ability; vide Press; consultations free. T.N., London Wall 8,977. Edgar Wright, Manager, 69 MOORGATE ST. (near Bank of England). West End Branch, 145, Oxford St., W. (T.N., Regent 4,830.)

DRESS

SMART GOWNS, Costumes, Furs, etc., at quarter original cost.—The Central Dress Agency, 14, Upper Baker Street (next to Bakerloo Tube).

FURS Renovated and Remodelled equal to new; Finest workmanship at half ordinary charges; Hundreds of Testimonials; Wonderful Results.—Fur Renovating Co., 58, Cheapside, London, E.C. 2.

FINANCIAL

ARE you troubled in any way—financially or otherwise? Having transacted investigations and business throughout the World I can help you, afford highest references, and advise free! All communications treated in the strictest confidence. Address: "Investigator," 17, Victoria Street, S.W. 1.

SCIENCE

SIGNORINA BASTINIA gives the original answers of Planchette to questions asked by earnest inquirers. A test question, 1/6. Apply by letter only, NORTH HOUSE, BISPHAM, LANCASHIRE.

ABOUT FASHIONS AND OTHER THINGS

By Various Hands

All ye who would follow in fashion's footsteps, be careful! Be *very* careful! for the dictators of La Mode are in dangerous mood, and her slaves are very nearly being immersed in the waters, not of oblivion, but of the ridiculous. Doubtless good taste and common sense will rise to the top before long, and the exaggerations that are being offered to us will soon be modified to meet the requirements of the majority, who, after all the emancipated years, will no doubt refuse the trammels of a skirt that is far too tight to be practical and too short to be becoming to any except the flapper. No doubt dresses that have no back, no sleeves, and stop short about the knees, and that cost far more than in the good old days, are profitable to the dressmaker, but it is impossible to think that they will appeal to the average Englishman. However, when we take the general lines of these frocks and modify their exaggerations, they can be very charming indeed. The feeling for width at the hips is very becoming to most of us, and a godsend to those to whom the very slim, straight silhouette has been a distinct trial.

Fashion may be freakish, but she is at least very fair, and every type of woman has her day. Panniers have come to stay. They have always been rather popular, particularly for evening dresses and the fluffy type of afternoon frock.

Coats and skirts and the tailor dress are still very plain and fairly straight, a modified barrel effect being arrived at by the slightly defined waist and the narrowness at—I was going to say the ankles, but this would not be quite correct. I *should* say the hem of the skirt. The coat reaches very nearly to this hem.

There is a great feeling for the alliance of a candy-striped woollen skirt to a coat of plain material, the coat being lined with the stripe and having a reversible scarf to match. This scarf, the outside of which is of plain material, is arranged with large slots in it about half-way down through which the arms can be thrust, giving a cape effect when it is not required as a muffler.

Brown is the favourite shade, and a very delightful coat and skirt has just been made on these lines for Scotland, carried out in rough reddish-brown tweed with a candy striped skirt and lining in many shades of brown woollen material. The brogues and stockings were a perfect match, as also was the little turned-up hat of velours cloth trimmed with a long shaded feather. Coats will be a very important feature of the autumn, as even if they do not quite cover the skirt they very nearly do so, and it is not at all necessary for the two to match. A very charming topcoat made for a leading firm is of velours cloth, beautifully tailored, with no superfluous fullness anywhere, and slightly moulded in such a way that it showed the beautiful lines of the figure without accentuating them. It boasted a giant collar of squirrel which terminated at the waist. The very deep, wide cuffs, which started at the elbow and reached the wrist, were also of the fur. The waist-line was defined by an inch-wide girdle of American cloth faced up with velours, and finishing in two long loose ends that reached the hem of the coat. But this girdle did not hold in the waist in any way; there was not the smallest wrinkle to be seen in the velours anywhere. The moulding depended entirely on the art of a clever cutter, an effect which we have almost forgotten in these days of chemise-cut frocks and coats.

If skirts for day wear are shorter than ever, fashion ordains that we shall be capricious in regard to our dinner frocks and tea gowns. They are longer this year, but rather too tight for comfort, and many of them boast little fish-tails. However, these tails are usually arranged in such a way that they can be hooked up if the wearer desires it, without losing the charm of outline. We are expecting great things of the sheath-like frock of black velvet or charmeuse with top and panniers of

TO-DAY'S TOILET HINTS.

INTERESTING SELECTIONS FROM THE WORLD'S SMARTEST BEAUTY ARTICLES—SIMPLE RECIPES MOST EFFECTIVE.

How to Discard an Unsightly Complexion.

"Toilet Club Notes."

How many women exclaim as they behold their ugly complexion in the mirror, "If I could only tear off this old skin!" and, do you know, it is now possible to do that very thing? Not to actually remove the entire skin all of a sudden; that would be too heroic a method and painful, too, I imagine. The worn out cuticle comes off in such tiny particles, and so gradually—requiring about ten days to complete the transformation—it doesn't hurt a bit. Day by day the beautiful complexion underneath comes forth. Marvellous! No matter how muddy, rough, blotchy or aged your complexion, you can surely discard it by this simple process. Just get some ordinary mercolised wax at your chemists, apply nightly like cold cream, washing it off in the mornings.

Why Have Grey Hair?

When a simple, old-fashioned and harmless recipe will correct it.

Few people know that grey hair is not a necessary feature of age—that it can be avoided without resorting to hair dyes. A very old, home-made remedy will turn the hair back to a natural colour in a few days. It is only necessary to get from the chemist two ounces of concentrate of tammalite and mix it with three ounces of bay rum. Apply this simple lotion to the hair for a few nights with a small sponge and you will soon have the pleasure of seeing the greyness disappear. This recipe is perfectly harmless, is neither sticky nor greasy, and has given perfect satisfaction for many generations to those in possession of the secret.

A Strange Shampoo.

"Cosy Corner Chats."

* * * I was much interested to learn from this young woman with the beautiful glossy hair that she never washes it with soap or artificial shampoo powders. Instead she makes her own shampoo by dissolving a teaspoonful of stallax granules in a cup of hot water. "I make my chemist get the stallax for me," said she. "It comes only in ¼ lb. sealed packages, enough to make up twenty-five or thirty individual shampoos, and it smells so good I could almost eat it." Certainly this little lady's hair did look wonderful even if she has strange ideas of a shampoo. I am tempted to try the plan myself.

Blackheads Instantly Go.

The new sparkling face bath treatment gives instant relief.

A very simple, harmless and pleasant process is now used to remove blackheads and correct greasiness and large pores in the skin. You have only to drop a tablet of stymol, obtained from the chemists, into a glass of hot water and bathe the face with the liquid after the effervescence has subsided. The blackheads will then come right off on the towel. The enlarged pores immediately contract to normal and the greasiness disappears, leaving the skin smooth, soft and cool and free from blemish. But to make sure that this desirable result is permanent, it is advisable to repeat the treatment several times at intervals of say about four or five days.

Is Powder Necessary?

"Practical Suggestions."

I say emphatically, No! There is a simple lotion which can be easily and cheaply made at home, and it is at the same time both effective and benefical to the complexion. Cleminite is a splendid substitute for face powder, which is at the bottom of many complexion troubles. Get about an ounce from the chemists and dissolve in four tablespoonfuls of water. The result is a fine clear liquid, which instantly gives the face, neck or arms that peach-like bloom of perfect health. There is nothing to equal it for greasy skins, and the result lasts all day long under the most trying conditions.

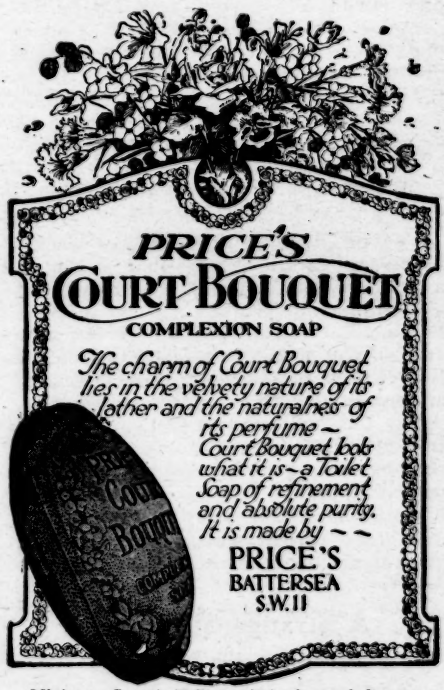
black tulle. Fine net and velvet are particularly attractive, and one delightful dinner frock has just been made in a banana shade of the velvet with draped panniers and an elusive top of pale gold lace. A couple of large chrysanthemums in that queer mauvy shade were tucked in front instead of the ubiquitous little tufts of ostrich feathers that one sees so often, and that are not really very attractive. They seem to carry too much of a *nouveau-riche* air about them.

Hats for the autumn are charming. Nearly all the models so far are in rich autumn shades of brown or virginia creeper red, and are trimmed with feathers of the sporting type (not ostrich) in every possible (and often impossible) hue. Many of them are in velours *pur et simple*, but the most attractive are in velours cloth, very soft and becoming, and are usually small, turned off the face, carrying one long curled tail feather or just a few wee ones, and it is usually finished off with a long brown lace veil which hangs halfway down the back. Many little pull-on shapes are being made of stitched velvet and stitched kid in all shades, both of which materials are practical and becoming.

Miss Nada Lynton, whose charming photo appears on the page facing first story, has recently returned to Town after a successful tour in the East, where she took the lead in a big Japanese propaganda film for the Toyo Film Company of Japan. Her agent is Blackmore's Dramatical Agency, to whom all communications should be made.

BEAUTY IN THE MAKING

A good complexion and bright, expressive eyes go further in the making of beauty than do perfect features. To preserve a youthful appearance it is necessary to pay attention to our complexions. This can be done by carrying out the treatment advised by the noted face specialist, Mrs. Adair. The Ganesh Muscle Oil, the virtues of which were discovered by this famous specialist when living in the Far East, feeds the muscles and restores firmness and roundness to the face. The use of the Eye Bandelettes and the Diable Tonics removes the tired look from the eyes and restores their brightness. The Lily Sulphur Lotion preserves the skin against the inclemency of the weather, and is of the greatest use to ladies who engage in outdoor sports. Mrs. Adair has also a special ointment and lotion for broken veins under the skin, the so frequent cause of the high broken colour that many middle-aged women get. The vibro-galvanic treatment for the reduction and removal of the most obstinate cases of double chin is most successful. For the convenience of ladies travelling, Mrs. Adair supplies a small japanned box fitted up with all the necessary lotions, etc., required for home treatment, and the little book published by her, to be obtained from 92, New Bond Street, gives all the necessary instructions.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COURT BOUQUET
COMPLEXION SOAP
The charm of Court Bouquet lies in the velvety nature of its lather and the naturalness of its perfume — Court Bouquet looks what it is — a Toilet Soap of refinement and absolute purity. It is made by — —
PRICE'S
BATTERSEA
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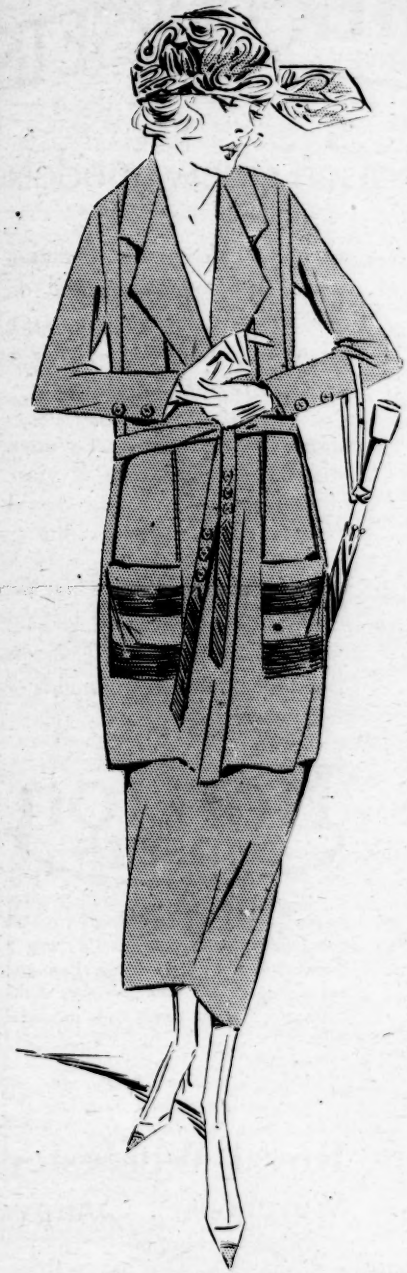
Miniature Sample Tablets will be forwarded upon receipt of 2d. for postage.
PRICE'S, BATTERSEA, S.W. 11



Practical SUITS

For Early Autumn Wear

Exclusive designs, made in fine quality materials. These Suits are perfectly cut and the finish is equal to that of the best type of garment usually made to order.

TAILOR SUIT in fine quality corded Suiting. Coat cut on plain, tailor-made lines, finished with narrow belt and braided pockets. Plain well-cut skirt in navy and black only.

Price 10½ Guineas

FUR RENOVATIONS AND REMODELLING should be put in hand now. Orders placed for renovations early in the Season will prevent disappointment, which will be unavoidable during the Winter months.

Debenham & Freebody
(DEBENHAMS LIMITED)
Wigmore Street.
(Cavendish Square) London.W.

Famous for over a Century
for Taste, for Quality, for Value.

ROYAL WORCESTER CORSETS
KIDFITTING

This season's new models

in Royal Worcester kidfitting corsets are now ready and on sale at houses of prestige throughout the United Kingdom. Prices **6/11** upwards.

Don't be in doubt—be sure about the foundation of your next dress by wearing Royal Worcester Corsets.

First again and certified by the inner circle of Parisian fashion designers as correct, these corsets dispel all doubts in the minds of their wearers.

BonTon CORSETS

are the highest grade of the Royal Worcester make, and range in price from 21/9 to 5 Guineas. They are the perfection of corsetry, and include all the comfort and none of the disadvantages of the corset made to special order.

The foundation dressmakers prefer.

Your dressmaker will **know** she has an opportunity of giving you her best if you are fitted with a new Royal Worcester Model **before** going to her. In fact, many of the leading dressmakers insist on fitting over Royal Worcester Corsets.

If unable to procure locally, write for name of our nearest Agent to—

Royal Worcester Warehouse Compy.

The Worcester Building, 76-78, Mortimer Street, London, W. 1.

SIMPLEX

INVITES the patronage of all who desire to retain pleasant memories of the Park meetings—or any other meeting in which they may be interested.

There are some who are prejudiced against the idea of receiving advice about racing—but why? If you know a friend in the City—one who is in intimate touch with the right people—do you not simply yearn to ask him to tell you what he knows? Of course you do, and just as the ordinary speculator or investor needs sound advice to guide him in his operations, so does he (or she) who takes a speculative interest in racing.

And why not have it? If you want advice on law, you go to a man of legal experience to get it; if you want advice on your health, you go to an expert for it, so why not seek the advice of an expert at racing? I have owned many winners, and I get to know the business intended by a good many stables, which knowledge, combined with experience and good judgment, and the fact that I spare no outlay and no trouble which will bring WINNERS, necessarily results in profit, both to myself and to those who patronise me.

Now, the first thing to remember is this—It is of no use backing horses every day just for the sake of having a bet. The only sure way to success is to *wait*, to wait until something really reliable comes along, and that is my part of the business, and I observe it strictly. I cannot and *will not* wire every day.

Another thing is, to unalterably confine your operations to *one horse*, and never more under any circumstances whatever. Then, by following these occasional items of genuine information, strictly one horse, you can absolutely rely on beating your bookmaker, and I want you to accept my help, for I know that I can win money for you regularly.

If you are attending any meeting, or if you are staying at home and desire to take a speculative interest in any race-meetings, you cannot do better than patronise me, for I have the best men on the Turf working for me, I employ men who attend every meeting and travel the training quarters, ever on the search for winners, and I am confident that the profit of the season 1919 will surpass even that of past years. I lay no claim to infallibility, but I DO claim experience and judgment, which MUST be beneficial to my followers.

I supply the information each day that I advise anything to be done, my terms being the odds to two sovereigns each winner. Add £2 to your stake every time, and the profit of that £2 (as paid to you by your bookmaker) is what you pay me for each win, as my fee for the advice. Don't run away with the idea that the information is dear, for it is nothing of the sort. It is not what you pay for WINS that counts against you, but what you pay your bookmaker for losers, and you will win oftener than you will lose if you follow me. Moreover, the information will really cost you very little, if you add my fee to your own stake every time, as the only out-of-pocket cost to you is when the information loses, which is not often.

Intending followers must send four stamped and addressed forms (or their cost), with clear instructions for me to follow, and settle promptly for winners as due. No commissions are executed, but I can wire direct to the Agents of those who cannot personally attend to wires.

FULL PARTICULARS FREE ON APPLICATION.

Fill in form below, and send along as directed, so as to start your new income NOW.

.....

SIMPLEX ADVICE BUREAU.

.....191.....

To SIMPLEX, 1, New Oxford-street, London, W.C.

Dear Sir,

Please register me as a follower of the above. I agree to return you the odds to Two Pounds on all winners, and I enclose four stamped telegrams (or their cost). I shall remit promptly as soon as I know results. I am of age and do not reside at any School or College.

Signed .....

.....

.....

Remember 4 stamped forms (or cost) for me to wire you.

If going to races—or staying at home—you want SIMPLEX.

MOTORS AND MOTORING

By W. Whittall

THE DELAY IN DELIVERIES

A question I am often asked is: Why are there no new cars coming through yet? Surely there has been time enough for the manufacturers to turn round and put their houses in order for post-war business, and that there must be slackness somewhere to account for the lack of new cars! True enough, there is slackness, but it is not fair to put the whole of the blame on the manufacturer. I know there are a few firms who, bloated with the profits they have made during the war, do not seem to care whether they keep faith with their car clients or not, but these are a very few indeed. The majority do care a great deal, and desire more than anything to get going on their legitimate business. So far as I can discover, the major blame must be placed on the shoulders of the workers, who—it is best to speak plainly—seem to be doing their best to hold back production and to reduce this country to the industrial level of Spain. Not only will they not put their backs into it, but the work they do condescend to do is too often shamefully scamped, and the inevitable result will be that the first of the new cars to come through will be well below the quality standard of the pre-war days.

I am told that there are millions of pounds' worth of new chassis standing waiting for engines which cannot be completed for want of the necessary castings. Batches of the latter come from the foundry in such a faulty condition that they have to be scrapped. In one works they think they are not doing badly if 20 per cent. of the castings they receive are usable. The worst of it is that the defects leading to rejection are generally not discernible until a lot of work has been done on the faulty casting. This work, naturally, has to be paid for, and as the car manufacturer is not in the business for his health, the cost goes on to the price of the complete new car.

THE GENERAL ATTITUDE

The other day I had a talk with the managing director of one of the big tyre manufacturing companies, and we got on to the subject of the general attitude of Labour towards work. As a case in point, he told me that before the war a good workman would turn out eleven tyre cases per day, and gave me an instance of one workman who, returned from military service, put through in a particular day four cases instead of his previous eleven, and of these four one was so bad it had to be rejected. He was quietly remonstrated with, and asked if he thought this was playing the game. Reaching for his coat, this "worker" said: "If you're going to talk to *me*, I'm off." That seems to be the spirit in which Labour, in the motor industry, anyway, is approaching the great task of the reconstruction of our industries, and it is mainly in consequence of that attitude that our cars are costing us enormous prices, and even at that we cannot get delivery of the vehicles, which ought to have been on the road three months ago had matters in the trade taken a normal course and the workers manifested anything like a sense of conscientious desire to help forward the national task. In the meantime we can buy an American car on which an import duty of 33⅓ per cent. has been paid for a little over half the price asked for a British vehicle of the same power and class! It needs no argument to indicate what is bound to be the industrial doom of this country unless the workers will see sense and come down to the realization that they have a duty to the community no less than the wicked capitalist employer.

RECKLESS DRIVING

Complaints are rife all over the country of the reckless and inconsiderate driving of cars, and it is clear that unless there is a vast improvement in the road manners of the motorist there will be trouble. Most of the bad driving is being done by the genus war motorist, who has never, until the war gave him or her an opportunity, had charge of any sort of road vehicle.

Early Autumn
Coats and Skirts
At Special Prices

Well cut and tailored, and made in fine quality Suiting Serge that can be recommended with the utmost confidence.

COAT and SKIRT in fine quality Suiting Serge. Coat cut on becoming tailor-made lines and finished with large braided pockets. Plain, well-cut skirt. In navy and black only.

PRICE $8\frac{1}{2}$ *GNS.*

FUR RENOVATIONS AND REMODELLING should be put in hand now. Orders placed for renovations early in the Season will prevent disappointment, which will be unavoidable during the Winter months.

MARSHALL & SNELGROVE

VERE·STREET·AND·OXFORD·STREET

LONDON W1